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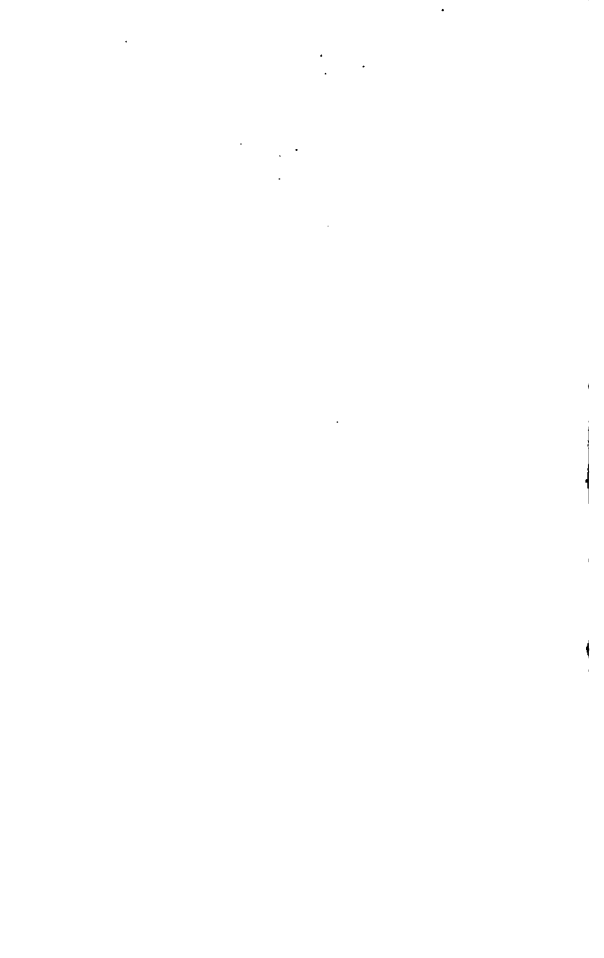
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James Lenox.









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SIR W. JONES'S LETTERS.

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1819—21.



SIR WILLIAM JONES'S

LETTERS

VOL. I.



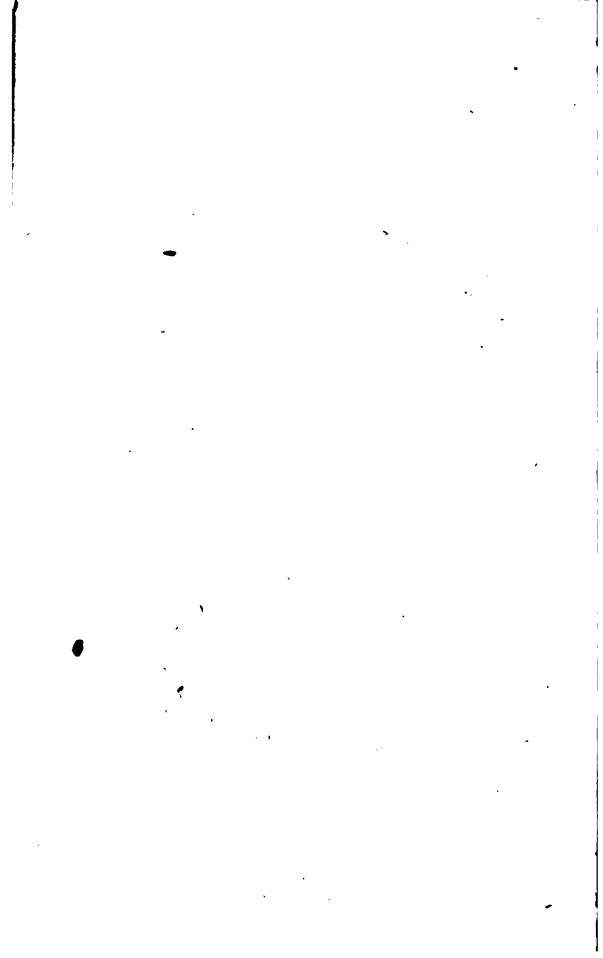
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LONDON, PUBLISHED BY JOHN SHARPE, PICCADILLY.

1821.

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SIR WILLIAM JONES'S LETTERS.

1.

*To C. Reviczki,**

How pleasing was that half-hour to me, in which we conversed on Persian poetry, our mutual delight ! I considered it the commencement of a most agreeable friendship and intercourse between us ; but my expectations are disappointed by the circumstances in which we are unavoidably placed ; for my business will confine me to the country longer than I wish ; and you, as I am informed, are pre-

* This letter was written in Latin, and in the beginning of the year 1768. Count Reviczki was imperial minister at Warsaw, and afterwards ambassador at the court of England : he was deeply skilled in Oriental literature.

paring to return immediately to Germany. I have, therefore to lament, that our intimacy is, as it were, nipped in the bud. I am not, however, without this consolation ; that if I cannot personally converse with you, I can at least correspond with you, and thus enjoy the satisfaction arising from a communication of our sentiments and studies. In mentioning our friendship, I shall not, I trust, be deemed guilty of an improper freedom. Similarity of studies, fondness for polite literature, congenial pursuits, and conformity of sentiments, are the great bonds of intimacy amongst mankind. Our studies and pursuits are the same, with this difference indeed—that you are already deeply versed in Oriental learning, whilst I am incessantly labouring with all my might to obtain a proficiency in it. But I will not allow you to excel me in partiality for those studies, since nothing can exceed my delight in them. From my earliest years, I was charmed with the poetry of the Greeks ; nothing, I then thought, could be more sublime than the odes of Pindar, nothing sweeter than Anacreon, nothing more polished or elegant than the golden remains of Sappho, Archilochus, Alcæus, and Simonides : but when I I had tasted the poetry of the Arabs and Persians *

* The remainder of this letter is lost ; but from the context, and the answer of Reviczki, we may conclude that it contained an elaborate panegyric on Eastern poetry.

II.

*From C. Reviczki.**

SIR,

London, Feb. 19, 1768.

I AM highly gratified by your recollection of me, as well as by the repeated compliments which you pay me, in your letters to Madame de Vacluse. I must acknowledge, that I feel not a little proud of them ; but still more, that an interview of a quarter of an hour has procured me the honour of your friendship. I should be most happy to cultivate it, if my plans allowed me to remain longer in this country, or if I could at least see you at Oxford, which I purpose visiting before I leave England. I hear with pleasure, that you have undertaken to publish a Treatise on Oriental Prosody. As I am convinced that you will perform this task most ably and successfully, I anticipate, with satisfaction, the mortification of all our European poets, who must blush at the poverty of their prosaic language, when they find that the Oriental dialects (independently of rhyme, which is of their invention) have true syllabic quantities, as well as the Greek, and a

* Written in French.

greater variety of feet, and consequently the true science of metre and prosody.

I take the liberty of sending you a rough sketch of one of my latest translations from Hafez, with whom I sometimes amuse myself in a leisure hour. You are too well acquainted with the genius of the Persian language, not to perceive the rashness of my attempt: I do not indeed pretend to give the beauty of the original, but merely its sense, simple and unornamented. I have added to it a very free paraphrase in verse, in which, however, the greatest deviation from the text consists in the occasional substitution of *mistress* for *mignon*, either to give a connexion to the stanzas, which in this kind of composition is never preserved, or to make it more conformable to our European taste. The Persian poet, indeed, speaks of his mistress in the first verse.

You will find in the margin several quotations from the Greek and Latin poets, which occurred to my recollection whilst I was reading Hafez, expressing the same sentiments with the Persian. I hope to have the satisfaction of seeing you here before I leave England, assuring you with truth, that I consider the honour of your acquaintance among the greatest advantages attending my visit to this country.

I am, &c.

III.

*From C. Reviczki.**

SIR,

London, Feb. 24, 1768.

I RECEIVED your learned and obliging letter on the same day on which I wrote to you ; and I read it with the greatest pleasure, though I could have wished that it had been more just to your own merit, and less flattering to me. I will not, however, take your expressions literally ; and notwithstanding your declarations, the taste and judgment which you have displayed in the passages quoted by you, evidently prove that you have advanced far in Oriental literature. I must however beg quarter for the Greek and Latin ; for, admitting what I am not disposed to deny, the perfection, and even the superiority of the Orientals, particularly the Persians, in some species of poetry, I would, without hesitation, renounce all knowledge of the three Eastern languages for that of the Greek alone. I rejoice that you have made so much progress in your work, and that I may hope soon to see it published ; but how to assist you with my advice I know not, as I have not with me a single treatise

* Written in French.

upon the subject of Oriental prosody. It is in truth an ocean; and such are the abundance and variety of measures used by the Orientals, that no memory can retain them.

I am very anxious to learn under what head you class the *Kasidah*, a species of composition highly admired by the Arabs, and very successfully cultivated by them: it has a nearer resemblance than any other kind of poetry to the Latin elegy, but its construction partakes of that of the *Gazel*,* with this difference, that the latter is restricted to thirteen couplets, whilst the number of those in the *Kasidah* is unlimited; and secondly, that in each distich of the *Gazel*, the sense must be complete and finished, whilst in the *Kasidah*, the sentiment is continued through successive lines.

Of this species of composition I do not know a more perfect specimen, than the poem on the death of Mohammed, so celebrated throughout the East, that every man of letters can repeat it. It is one continued allegory, but admirable and pathetic; and begins, if I rightly remember, thus:

Does memory recall the blissful bowers
Of Solyma, the seat of many a friend;
That thus thy grief pours forth such copious showers,
And bursting sighs thy labouring bosom rend?

With respect to your doubts on the supposed allegory of Hafez, much may be said. I am rather inclined to believe, that the mystical exposition

* Amatory poem; it is not restricted to thirteen couplets, as Reviczki writes, but to seventeen, and generally contains about seven or eight.

of this great poet, by the Mohammedans, may be imputed to their veneration and respect for his memory, and that their object in it is to justify his conduct as a poet, by representing him equally irreproachable in his morals and compositions. Most of the commentators, as Shemy, Surury, and others, labour to give a mystical interpretation of his verses on wine, youth, pleasures, and a contempt for religion, so discreditable to a good Musulman; but the ablest of them all, the learned Sadi, disclaims this mode of illustration, and professes to give a literal exposition of the text of Hafez, in opposition to the opinions of other commentators, and without questioning the purity of their intentions. It may not be amiss to communicate to you an anecdote, which I have read somewhere respecting Hafez.* After the death of this great man, some of the religious were disposed to deny his body the right of sepulture, alleging, in objection, the licentiousness of his poetry; after a long dispute, they left the decision to a divination in use amongst them, by opening his book at random, and taking the first couplet which occurred: it happened to be this:

Turn not away from Hafez' bier,
Nor scornful check the pitying tear;
For though immersed in sin he lies,
His soul forgiven to heaven shall rise.

* This anecdote is quoted by sir William Jones, in the ninth chapter of his Commentaries on Asiatic poetry, where he states the respective arguments in support of a *literal* or *mystical* interpretation of it. Without pronouncing a positive decision, he gives an opinion in favour of a literal interpretation as the most probable.

This passage was deemed a divine decision ; the religious withdrew their objections, and he was buried in Mosella, a place rendered famous by his own verses. This anecdote, I think, is related by Kaleb Celebi. As to myself, although I am disposed to believe that when Hafiz speaks of love and wine, he has no recondite meaning, I am equally willing to declare, that his writings are not disgraced by those obscenities, nor those gross and filthy expressions, which so frequently occur in Sadi.

Nor can I avoid considering him a free-thinker : and a hundred passages might be quoted, in which the poet ridicules the prophet and his Corán ; as for instance, when he says,

Wine, that our sober seer proclaims
Parent of sin, and foul misnames,
With purer joy my soul beguiles,
Than beauty's bloom, or beauty's smiles.

As to the Turkish poets, I confess I do not read them with the same pleasure, although I am willing to allow that some of them have merit. In my opinion, Ruhi of Bagdat is the most agreeable of them all : he has written some admirable satires. Perhaps you are not acquainted with him. The Turkish poets, in general, are no better than slavish imitators of the Persians, and often deficient in taste and harmony.

I am, with the greatest esteem and veneration,
sir, &c.

IV.

*From C. Reviczki.**

London, March 7, 1768.

I AM at a loss to determine whether your letter has afforded me most pleasure or instruction; it is indeed so admirable, that I must point out the only fault which I find in it, that of brevity, although you seem apprehensive of being thought tedious. I suspect that I am indebted to your partiality, and politeness only, for the excessive encomiums which you have bestowed upon my translation of the two odes which I sent to you, as well as for the favourable opinion which you entertain of my trifles. I am, however, seriously obliged to you for your animadversions upon my inaccuracies, though, when I consider their number, I must impute it to your indulgence, that you have been so sparing in your corrections. Without wishing to lessen my obligations to your kindness, I cannot avoid mentioning, by way of apology, that it is only three months since I resumed the task of writing verses, which I renounced when I left school; and not from any motive of vanity, or desire of reputation, but merely as

* Written in Latin.

an amusement of my leisure hours. My relapse has produced the translation of about fifty odes of our learned Hafez,

For whom each hour a growing fondness brings,
As by degrees the vernal alder springs.*

But observing, in the progress of the work, the immense inferiority of my version to the original, I began to be disgusted with it.

I recollect to have read somewhere, with great pleasure, the Prelections of the bishop of Oxford, of which you speak so highly, and which you propose to imitate ; but I remember nothing more of this work, than that I thought both the style and arrangement of it equally admirable. The Grecian and Oriental flowers, scattered throughout your letter, delighted me exceedingly, and your selection of them shows your judgment : I also approve your idea of visiting the East ; but previously to your undertaking it, I would recommend to you to make yourself master of the common language of the Turks, or of the vulgar Arabic, not only as indispensably necessary to your communications with the Mohammedans, but as a means of deriving pleasure and profit from the journey.

I do not mean to apply my censures on the servile imitations of Turkish authors to every species of imitation ; for, in some instances, the imitation, as in the case of Virgil with respect to Hesiod, has surpassed the original. Nor can Hafez himself

* These lines are taken from a juvenile translation of sir Wm. Jones.

deny the imputation of plagiarism, having actually transcribed whole lines from other poets : his collection of poems begins with an instance of this kind ; for the very first hemistich is transcribed from one of Yezid,* the son of Mowavea, with an alteration only in the collocation of the words, not to mention nearly a complete ode in another place ; but I am disgusted with the flat and perpetual imitation of the many Turkish poets, to whom we may aptly apply the words of Horace :

O servile herd of imitators !—

Do you wish to know my opinion respecting the other Persian poets, and whether I think Hafez alone elegant ? Far from it ; for who can read without ecstasy the first page of Sadi ? Indeed, my passion for Oriental literature was first excited by hearing the following lines of Sadi accidentally repeated by my teacher at Constantinople, who explained them to me :

All-bounteous Lord ! whose providential care
Ev'n on thy proud rebellious sons descends ;
How canst thou bid thy votaries despair,
Whose boundless mercy to thy foes extends ?

But who can suppress his indignation when he reads the wretched translation of this elegant writer, by Gentius ? I acknowledge, however, that I am more delighted with Hafez, who unites fine morality

* Yezid was the son of Mowavea, the first caliph of the race of Ommiah.

with cheerfulness. With respect to Jami, whose works I do not at present possess, I remember enough of what I read at Constantinople to venture to assert, that he is the most successful of the Persian poets. In the judgment of Sadi, Hafez is unequal; some of his odes are excellent, others very inferior, and some very tame; whilst Jami preserves an equality throughout. I have not translated the ode of Hafez, "If that fair maid," &c.* into Latin verse, as the sense is so unconnected: but a prose translation of it, with notes, if you wish to have it, is at your service. In the mean time, I send you my latest production, not complete indeed, but a mere embryo.—Farewell,

P. S. It is little to say, I approve your Arabic verses: I really admire them, but dare not, in this instance, attempt to imitate you.

REVICZKI.

* See a poetical translation of this ode, in sir William Jones's works, vol. ii. p. 241.

V.

*From C. Revczki.**

London, March 17, 1768.

I WAS highly delighted with your letter, particularly with your various translations, imitations, and compositions : they not only prove you have

Made the Greek authors your supreme delight ;
Read them by day, and studied them by night—
(*Francis.*)

but that you have attained all the peculiar elevation, as well as elegance, of that language. Your Ode to Venus is as beautiful as Venus herself ; and you have imitated with wonderful success so divine an original.

Is it not melancholy to reflect, that not only so much of the compositions of this elegant writer should be lost, but that the little which remains is so mutilated and corrupted ?

That the text of the ode selected by you, and even that preserved by Dionysius, and published by

* Written in Latin.

Upton, is preferable to that of Stephens, or whoever made the emendations (such as they are), I freely admit; for the rules of dialect are not only better observed, but it contains stronger marks of being genuine: yet, after all, it is impossible to deny, that there are many chasms in it, as well as errors, which cannot be satisfactorily amended by any explanation or twisting of the sense.

That Sappho wrote in the dialect of her own country, which cannot at this time be perfectly understood, is sufficiently probable; but it would be absurd to suppose the Æolic dialect irreconcilable to metre and prosody; not to mention the evident corruption of the sense in some passages.

* * * * *

Your translation of the Epigram on the Kiss of Agatho, is very elegant; and the idea in it resembles that of Hafez, in the following lines:

Anxious thy blooming charms to see,
Quick to my lips my soul ascends.
Must it expire or live?—decree:—
For on thy voice my fate depends.

I send you; as I promised, a prose translation of the Persian ode, together with an attempt at a poetical version of it, which I will hereafter improve. Pray, inform me whether there is any translation of Hafez, printed or manuscript, in Latin, or any other European language; for I know of no other attempt at a translation of this poet, than that of the first ode, lately published in the *Analecta* of Professor Hyde.

I request likewise to be informed, where I am likely to find the first book of the Iliad of Homer, with an analysis and notes, for the use of scholars, printed in England, which a friend of mine wishes to procure for his son.

The ode, of which you praise the concluding verse, is elegant : I remember only the first couplet :—

Bring wine, and scatter flowers around ;
Nor seek the depths of fate to sound.
Such was the morning rose's tale :
What say'st thou, warbler of the vale ?

Although I have begun the preparations for my departure, and have packed up my books, if you wish to have a translation of this ode, or if it will be of any use to you, I will undertake it before I go. I wait your commands.

Farewell.

VI.

*From C. Reviczki.**

London, March 29, 1768.

THAT I have deferred longer than usual my reply to your obliging letter, you must impute to the novel and strange appearance of things here. You will not, I trust, be disposed to blame a delay, occasioned by the attention of a foreigner to customs which are peculiar to your country, and which I never observed in any other; for I confess to you, that I never saw any thing similar to the mode here pursued of electing members of parliament: the novelty of it at first amused me, but the increasing tumult sickened and disgusted me, and, by compelling me to remain at home, afforded me an opportunity of writing to you. I rejoice that my version of the Persian ode pleases you, and that it has induced you to think me equal to the translation of the whole collection: but highly as I am honoured by your opinion, I cannot but think your advice somewhat unmerciful; for what mortal, unless

Or oak, or brass, with triple fold,
Around his daring bosom roll'd—

(*Francis.*)

* Written in Latin.

would undertake a translation, in prose and verse, of six hundred odes? The attempt would not only require many years, but an entire exemption from all other occupations, which is not my case: I can only make these studies my occasional amusement. I mean, however, some time or other, to publish as much as I can.

The person who applied to me for the first book of the Iliad, with a verbal analysis, already possesses the key to Homer; but he thinks the other work better adapted to the use of boys, because the notes in it are subjoined to the text, which is not the plan of the Clavis. If you have one at hand, oblige me by just looking into it; for, if my memory does not fail me, there is a catalogue prefixed, mentioning the work which I want, and the name of the printer.

Although your politeness has excused any farther efforts, I nevertheless send the ode which you requested in your last letter but one, as I think it will please you. It is by no means one of the easiest, either to understand or translate; and indeed, the force of the peculiar idioms of a foreign language cannot be well conveyed by any circumlocution.

You ask my opinion of the affinity between the Hebrew and Arabic, and of an idiom, common to both, of using the future for the past. Though I seldom read Hebrew, or, to say the truth, though I consider this sacred language rather as an object of veneration than of delight, (for, excepting the Old Testament itself, and some rabbinical dreams about it, there is nothing in it worth perusal), I well remember, from the little of it which I have

read, having remarked a close connexion between the grammar of the Hebrew and Arabic: the moods and tenses in both are so few, as to require the frequent substitution of one for another: the Greek, however, which is so redundant in moods and tenses, sometimes does the same; for instance, when it uses the infinitive for the imperative. With respect to the measures used in the two languages, I am of a different opinion; for I consider the metrical art of the Arabs of much later invention, and to have assumed its present form only a short time before Mohammed, there being no trace whatever among them of a more ancient poetry. If the Hebrew poetry had a similar construction, which may indeed be suspected from a similar use of the vowels, we might, by this time, have traced, without difficulty, the laws of Hebrew metre by the analogy.

If the text of the ode, which you mention to have read in the miscellaneous works of some anonymous author, had been correct, you would not have wanted my humble assistance: but it is so full of errors, that I must be an Œdipus to interpret it. Every one knows, that the mere irregularity of the diacritical points occasions infinite difficulty in the Oriental languages: but this is doubly increased by the casual omission or alteration of the letters themselves. It is therefore absolutely necessary, in my opinion, as it is impossible to find manuscripts without errors, to possess two copies of every one which you read, that the faults of the one may be corrected by the other; and this is my method.



I have only to conclude, by thanking you for your Italian sonnet, and expressing the commendation to which it is entitled.

Farewell.

VII.

*To C. Reviczki.**

April, 1768.

NOTHING can afford a stronger proof of your polite attention to me, than your last very friendly letter, which you contrived to write in the midst of city bustle, during the noise of riotous mobs, and the tumult of a parliamentary election ; and to accompany it with a most beautiful Persian ode, and a Latin translation. Our favourite Hafez deserves indeed to be fed with ambrosia, and I daily discover, with increasing delight, new beauties and elegances in him. The principal difficulty attending the translation and publication of his poems as you have begun, consists in giving them a poetical dress : but this will prove easier than you imagine ; for there are many of his odes, which I conclude you will not attempt to translate, as containing expressions wholly foreign to our manners—lofty and

* Written in Latin.

daring figures, or abrupt unconnected lines; and this will, in some measure, alleviate the Herculean labour of the task.

• • • • •

If I were not a sincere lover of truth, and averse from all dissimulation, I should lament that our capital has fallen under your inspection in these times of turbulence and distraction, when the liberty of my country, so universally celebrated, has degenerated into unbridled licentiousness, not to say outrage. The original form of our constitution is almost divine;—to such a degree, that no state of Rome or Greece could ever boast one superior to it; nor could Plato, Aristotle, nor any legislator, even conceive a more perfect model of a state. The three parts which compose it, are so harmoniously blended and incorporated, that neither the flute of Aristoxenus, nor the lyre of Timotheus, ever produced more perfect concord. What can be more difficult than to devise a constitution, which, while it guards the dignity of the sovereign, and liberty of the people, from any encroachment, by the influence and power of the nobility, preserves the force and majesty of the laws from violation, by the popular liberty? This was the case formerly in our island, and would be so still, if the folly of some had not prompted them to spur on the populace, instead of holding them in. I cannot therefore restrain my indignation against Wilkes, a bold and able, but turbulent man, the very torch and firebrand of sedition. But what can be said in defence of the honour and consistency of some of our nobility, who, after having given him

their countenance and support, shamefully deserted and betrayed him ?

If you wish to obtain more accurate information respecting our laws and customs, I recommend to your perusal Smith's Treatise on the English Constitution, and the Dialogue of Fortescue in praise of the Laws of England. Thomas Smith was the English Ambassador in France in the reign of Elizabeth, and his work is in Latin, and not inelegantly written. To Fortescue's little tract, we may apply the words of Xenophon to the Teleboas : " It is not large, but beautiful." He was chancellor of England under Henry the Sixth, and was compelled, by the distractions of the times, to take refuge, with his pupil Prince Edward, in France, where, in an advanced age, he composed his little golden dialogue. These books will convince you, that our laws are framed with the greatest wisdom, and that (as Pindar, quoted by Plato in his Gorgias, says),

Sovereign o'er all, eternal Law,
On gods and men imposes awe ;
And Justice, strengthen'd by her hand,
O'er all exerts supreme command.

When I reflect on our constitution, I seem, as it were, to contemplate a game at chess—a recreation in which we both delight : for we have a king, whose dignity we strenuously defend, but whose power is very limited ; the knights, and rooks, and other pieces, have some kind of resemblance to the orders of nobility, who are employed in war, and in the management of public affairs ; but the principal strength is in the pawns, or people : if these are

firmly united, they are sure of victory ; but if divided and separated, the battle is lost. The motions of all, as in the game of chess, are regulated by fixed laws. Lastly, when I consider myself, I seem like a spectator, contemplating, for his mere amusement, the two parties at the game : but, if it ever should be my lot to be concerned in the administration of affairs, I will renounce gain and popularity, and pursue one object, and one only, to preserve our beautiful constitution inviolate.

Contrary to my intention, I find I have been prolix ; I will, therefore, turn to another subject. I read your last letter with an apprehension, that it might communicate the intelligence of your speedy departure from England ; but as you are silent on this head, as my business here will soon be concluded, and as I know the uncertainty of all human affairs ; I am determined to embrace an opportunity, which, if I now neglect, may not again occur—of paying you a visit in London about the middle of the month.

Farewell.

VIII.

*To C. Reviczki.**

(No date.—1768.)

I HAVE received your two letters, replete with taste and erudition : your kindness towards me is as conspicuous in them, as the brilliancy of your genius.—I now reply to both.

Your approbation of my intention to publish my work, gives me, as it ought, great pleasure ; for I cannot but rejoice, as Hector in the tragedy says, “ in the praise of one who is himself entitled to praise.” The perusal of the two odes of the divine poet afforded me infinite delight ; they are very beautiful, but their beauties are more conspicuous from your luminous interpretation. Your metrical imitation of them is elegant ; and if you will allow me to publish it in my work, you will equally oblige me and my readers, who will be glad to hear the Persian poet speak Latin ; if you object to this, copies of them shall be deposited with my treasures, and the originals restored to you as soon as possible. You bid me return the verses to you when I am tired with them : this is as much as to say, keep them for ever ; for it is impossible that I can ever be tired with the perusal.

* Written in Latin.

IX.

*To C. Reviczki. **

Oxford, Nov. 1768.

I CANNOT resist the temptation of writing to you, although I fear you may have quitted this country before my letter arrives.

I have received your obliging letter, with an elegant ode of Hafez, which I read with the greatest pleasure, or rather devoured.

But what necessity is there to say more, since it is possible that what I write may never reach you? Let me, again and again, entreat and beseech your remembrance of me wherever you go, and that you will write to me as speedily, and at as great a length, as possible. Be assured, that nothing has, or ever can, afford me greater pleasure than your friendship.

* Written in Latin.

X.

*From a Letter to John Wilmot, Esq.**

“ My life is one unvaried scene of writing letters, and attending the *donzelle vexzose e tenerolle*, by whose beauties I confess myself easily overcome.

“ I have just read Robertson's Life of Charles the Fifth, the narrative of which is amusing and instructive, and the style flowing and elegant: but the former wants that spirit and fire of genius, that alone can make a history animated, and leave great impressions on the mind; and the latter has too great a sameness in the turn of the sentences, and abounds with too many affected words.

“ I have also given my favourite Petrarch a second reading, and was so much pleased with his lamentations over Laura, that I selected the most beautiful passages, and threw them all together in the form of an elegy, which I send you enclosed, but beg you will return it as soon as you can, as I have no other copy. I fear I shall not be at Oxford this spring, but am not certain. Give my compli-

* This letter was written from Wimbledon in the spring of 1769.

ments to Poore, and tell him, if he will descend from the starry temple of philosophy, and write to a very idle fellow, I shall be glad to hear from him; especially as I am desirous of knowing his sentiments about my treatise, *De Poësi Asiaticâ*."

XI.

*To Lady Spencer.**

September 7, 1769.

THE necessary trouble of correcting the first printed sheets of my history prevented me to-day from paying a proper respect to the memory of Shakespeare, by attending his jubilee: but I was resolved to do all the honour in my power to so great a poet, and set out in the morning, in company with a friend, to visit a place, where Milton spent some part of his life, and where, in all probability, he

* Mr. Jones had been appointed private tutor to lord Althorpe, now earl Spencer. In the summer of 1768, his lordship was settled at Harrow, and Mr. Jones accompanied him thither. During the autumnal vacation of the ensuing year, he (Mr. Jones) visited his friends at Oxford, and made an excursion to Forest-hill, the occasional habitation of Milton. The public will read with pleasure, in the following animated letter, his relation of what he saw and felt on this occasion.

composed several of his earliest productions. It is a small village, situated on a pleasant hill, about three miles from Oxford, called Forest Hill, because it formerly lay contiguous to a forest, which has since been cut down. The poet chose this place of retirement after his first marriage; and he describes the beauties of his retreat, in that fine passage of his *L'Allegro*:

Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green.

* * * *

While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blythe,
And the mower whets his scythe;
And every shepherd tells his tale,
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landscape round it measures:
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast,
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim, with daisies pied;
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide;
Towers and battlements it sees,
Bosom'd high in tufted trees.

* * * *

Hard by a cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks, &c.

It was neither the proper season of the year, nor time of the day, to hear all the rural sounds, and see all the objects mentioned in this description; but, by a pleasing concurrence of circumstances, we

were saluted, on our approach to the village, with the music of the mower and his scythe; we saw the ploughman intent upon his labour; and the milk-maid returning from her country employment.

As we ascended the hill, the variety of beautiful objects, the agreeable stillness and natural simplicity of the whole scene, gave us the highest pleasure. We at length reached the spot whence Milton undoubtedly took most of his images: it is on the top of the hill, from which there is a most extensive prospect on all sides: the distant mountains, that seemed to support the clouds; the villages and turrets, partly shaded with trees of the finest verdure, and partly raised above the groves that surrounded them; the dark plains and meadows of a grayish colour, where the sheep were feeding at large; in short, the view of the streams and rivers convinced us that there was not a single useless or idle word in the above-mentioned description, but that it was a most exact and lively representation of nature. Thus will this fine passage, which has always been admired for its elegance, receive an additional beauty from its exactness. After we had walked, with a kind of poetical enthusiasm, over this enchanted ground, we returned to the village.

The poet's house was close to the church; the greatest part of it has been pulled down, and what remains belongs to an adjacent farm. I am informed, that several papers, in Milton's own hand, were found by the gentleman who was last in possession of the estate. The tradition of his having lived there is current among the villagers: one of them showed us a ruinous wall that made part of

his chamber; and I was much pleased with another, who had forgotten the name of Milton, but recollected him by the title of The Poet.

It must not be omitted, that the groves near this village are famous for nightingales, which are so elegantly described in the *Penseroso*. Most of the cottage windows are overgrown with sweet-briers, vines, and honey-suckles; and that Milton's habitation had the same rustic ornament, we may conclude, from his description of the lark bidding him good-morrow,

Through the sweet-brier, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:

for it is evident, that he meant a sort of honey-suckle by the eglantine; though that word is commonly used for the sweet-brier, which he could not mention twice in the same couplet.

If I ever pass a month or six weeks at Oxford in the summer, I shall be inclined to hire and repair this venerable mansion, and to make a festival for a circle of friends, in honour of Milton, the most perfect scholar, as well as the sublimest poet, that our country ever produced. Such an honour will be less splendid, but more sincere and respectful, than all the pomp and ceremony on the banks of the Avon.

I have the honour, &c.

XII.

*To C. Reviczki.**

Nice, Feb. 4, 1770.

THE date of my letter will not fail to surprise you ; for I do not write from the plains through which the Thames or Isis, so justly dear to me, glides, but from the foot of the Alps, and in front of the Ligurian sea.

I have resided in this delightful little spot nearly three months ; it was not possible, therefore, for me to receive your two most acceptable letters, dated in September and January, before my departure from England : I have read them with singular pleasure, to which their length did not a little contribute. You cannot conceive my anxiety to peruse your Treatise on the Military Art of the Turks : it is, I understand, deposited in lord Spencer's house in London ; but I expect to receive a copy by the first vessel which sails from England to this port, and I will take care that the three remaining copies shall be safely and expeditiously de-

* Written in Latin. Towards the end of the year 1769, Mr. Jones accompanied the family of lord Spencer in a journey to the continent : the following letter describes his occupations and reflections during this journey.

livered to your friends, and if yours, mine also, although I do not even know them by sight.

The approbation which your work has received in Germany, delights, without surprising me. It was first mentioned to me by a nobleman of that country, apparently a man of taste and amiable manners, who holds, I believe, a public office at Milan; and he promised not only to send it to me, but to inform me of your health, and where to address you—a promise which gave me the greatest satisfaction; for I suspected (forgive the injustice of the suspicion) that I no longer retained a place in your remembrance, and, in consequence, despaired of hearing from you, unless I first wrote to you. In this suspense, I received your two most welcome letters, with fourteen odes: they are not only worthy of the lyre, but the lyre to which they are sung, ought to be of gold. I am indeed proud of your condescension in asking my opinion of them, as I can by no means think myself entitled to such an honour. I will however make my remarks upon them as well as I can, and return them to you, when I receive an answer to this letter; for I should be sorry to trust such precious writings to the uncertain conveyance of the post.

This letter will probably reach you in a fortnight, and I beg you to gratify me by an early acknowledgment of it; for I assure you, with great truth, that nothing can give me more pleasure than a letter from you, however hasty. You perhaps wish to know how I employed my time after your departure from England: a short explanation will suffice. Amongst other occupations, I revised and

corrected my Commentaries on Oriental Poetry; and when I was preparing an accurate transcription of the manuscript for your perusal, I was unexpectedly interrupted by a business of more importance.*

• • • • •

I had scarcely brought this work to a conclusion, when, in consequence of the sudden indisposition of the younger sister of my pupil (who frequently talks of you), her father determined to pass the winter with his family in Italy, or the south of France: I was therefore under the necessity of intrusting my history (as the king of Denmark was anxious for its publication) to a Frenchman, upon whose accuracy I could depend, for correcting the errors of the press. I have just learned from him, that the work is printed; and I will take care that not even his Danish majesty shall receive a copy of it before you. Having thus left England, we repaired to Paris; and after rather a tedious residence there, we proceeded with great rapidity by the Rhone to Lyons, and, from that place, continued our journey by Marseilles, Frejus, and Antibes, to Nice,

Where Spring in all her charms perpetual reigns,
And banish'd Winter flies the blooming plains.

Even here we shall remain longer than I wish; but I hope to return to England by the beginning

* The business here alluded to, is the translation of the Life of Nadir Shah, which was made by Mr. Jones, at the desire of the king of Denmark.

of June. I propose, however, if I should have an opportunity, to cross the sea about the middle of this month, and visit Florence, that celebrated colony of the Triumviri, and the cradle of reviving literature; as well as Rome, the nurse of all elegant arts; and perhaps Naples; but on this plan you shall hereafter know my determination. You may perhaps inquire, what are my occupations at this place? I will tell you in few words: music, with all its sweetness and feeling; difficult and abstruse problems in mathematics; the beautiful and sublime in poetry and painting; these occupy all my senses and thoughts: nor do I neglect the study of the military art, which it would be the greatest disgrace to an English gentleman not to be acquainted with. I have written much in my native language, and, amongst other things, a little tract on Education, in the manner of Aristotle, that is, the analytic manner. I have moreover begun a tragedy, to which I have given the title of Soliman, whose most amiable son perished miserably, as you know, by the treachery of a step-mother: the story is full of the most affecting incidents, and has more sublimity even than the tragedies of *Æschylus*, as it abounds with Oriental images. I send you translations of two odes—one from *Hafez*, the other from a very ancient Arabic poet; but I have adapted the images of the latter to the Roman manners: and I fill the remainder of the paper with a Greek epigram, in imitation of a little English song.—Farewell. You shall have your papers as soon as I am informed that you have received this letter,

XIII.

*To Nathanael Brassey Halhed.**

Nice, March 1, 1770.

I RECEIVED your short letter with great pleasure, as it convinced me, that you were not insensible of my esteem for you, and such as resemble you. I wrote immediately to my friends, as you desired, most earnestly requesting them to promote your views, as if my own interest were concerned; if they accede to my wishes in this respect, they will oblige me and themselves too; for doubtless I shall be ready to make them every return that I can. I think, however, that I shall have it in my power to serve you more effectually, after my return to England; and I beg you to believe, that no inclination or efforts, on my part, shall ever be wanting to promote your wishes.

My health is good; but I long for those enjoyments, of which I know not well how to bear the privation. When I first arrived here, I was delighted with a variety of objects, rarely, if ever, seen in my own country—olives, myrtles, pomegranates, palms, vineyards, aromatic plants, and a surprising variety

• Written in Latin.

of the sweetest flowers, blooming in the midst of winter. But the attraction of novelty has ceased ; I am now satiated, and begin to feel somewhat of disgust. The windows of our inn are scarcely thirty paces from the sea ; and, as Ovid beautifully says,

Tired, on the uniform expanse I gaze.

I have, therefore, no other resource, than, with Cicero, to count the waves, or, with Archimedes and Archytas, to measure the sands. I cannot describe to you how weary I am of this place, nor my anxiety to be again at Oxford, where I might jest with you, or philosophize with Poore. If it be not inconvenient, I wish you would write to me often, for I long to know how you and our friends are ; but write, if you please, in Latin, and with gaiety ; for it grieves me to observe the uneasiness under which you appear to labour. Let me ever retain a place in your affection, as you do in mine ; continue to cultivate polite literature ; woo the Muses ; reverence philosophy ; and give your days and nights to composition, with a due regard, however, to the preservation of your health.

XIV.

*To C. Reviczki.**

Nice, April, 1770.

IT is impossible to describe my vexation at not hearing from you; and I can only conclude that you have not received my letter of February, or, what would be more unpleasant, that your letter has miscarried; or finally, what I dread even to suspect, that I no longer retain a place in your remembrance. I have written to you from this place, not (as Cicero says to Luceius) a very fine epistle, but one that I cannot but think would be acceptable to you, because it was very long, and contained, besides, much information respecting myself. After a sufficient time for the receipt of an answer, which I most anxiously expected, I daily inquired if there were any letters from Vienna;—none, none, was the reply day after day. My anxiety and uneasiness at this disappointment daily increased; and nearly two months are now elapsed without a line from you. What can I do? or what shall I devise? I fear to trust your papers, which you desired me to return,

* Written in Latin.

to a conveyance so hazardous as the post ; although I am persuaded it will be inconvenient for you to be so long without them : but although I cannot venture to send them before I hear from you, I enclose my remarks, which you may throw into the fire, if you do not like them : they are, as you seemed to wish, somewhat hypercritical, and perhaps too severe.

Your Treatise on the Military Art of the Turks delighted me exceedingly ; nothing can be more useful or opportune. As I cannot depend upon this letter reaching you, I write but little, having no wish to talk to the winds, and risk the loss of time, which I can better employ. I expect to leave this town about the middle of the month. My proposed Italian expedition is deferred to a future period. Farewell, my Charles, and remember me, as I do you. After my return to England, I will write to you frequently, and my letters shall be longer and more cheerful.

XV.

*To C. Reviczki.**

(Date erased.)

ALTHOUGH I cannot possibly receive an answer to my letter before I leave this place, I will not have to reproach myself for neglecting an opportunity of writing to you. I concur most heartily in your sentiments on the pleasures of travelling, as on all other subjects: nothing, in my opinion, can be more useful or more delightful. How much more agreeable would my journey be, if I could make Vienna a part of it, where I might enjoy your conversation, philosophize with you, trifle away an idle hour, or explore with you the hidden treasures of poetry. As I am deprived of this happiness, I shall take the liberty of saying something not so favourable of the pleasures which I actually enjoy. I am disgusted with the odious rattle of French gaiety; and the calm serenity of an Italian sky has something gloomy in it. I am so much in love with myself, *i. e.* so much beside myself, that in my own eyes I appear more worthy of your friendship than ever. You cannot conceive how

* Written in Latin.

different I am from what you knew me in England. I was then young and thoughtless ; now I devote myself wholly to polite literature ; and the great objects of my ambition, are virtue, fame, and, above all, your friendship ; objects than which nothing can be more divine, estimable, or dear to me. That I may not altogether write an *unlettered letter*, I send you a Greek version of an English epigram : it was composed, in a calm night, by a friend of mine, and I translated it at his request. I think it will please you, as it appears to have an affinity to the style of Meleager, and other poets in the Anthologia.

XVI.

To Lady Spencer.

Nice, April 14, 1770.

It is with great pleasure that I acquaint your ladyship, that Mrs. Poyntz, Lady Harriet, and her brother are perfectly well : Mrs. Poyntz goes this morning to Villa Franca ; I am to be her knight, and am just equipped to mount my Rosinantè ; Mademoiselle Annette is to go upon Lady Mary Somerset's ass ; so we shall make a formidable procession : it is a delightful morning, and I hope Mrs. Poyntz will be pleased with her jaunt. We have had very bad wea-

ther; violent rains and storms of thunder in the night, a close sultry heat all day, and a very sharp cold every evening; but the spring seems now to be pretty well settled; and I fancy we shall have a continually clear sky, and a mild air, as long as we stay. We all promise ourselves great pleasure in our journey homewards; and we have great reason to believe it will be enchantingly pleasant.— I have every day more and more reason to be pleased with the unfolding of my pupil's disposition; your ladyship will perhaps think these to be words of course, and what you might naturally expect from any other person in my situation; but, believe me, I say them upon no other motive than their truth; for if it were my nature to speak to any one what I do not think, I should at least speak truly to your ladyship, of whom I am, with the greatest truth,

The obliged and grateful humble servant,

WILLIAM JONES.

XVII.

To Lady Spencer.

Paris, 4th June, 1770.

YOUR ladyship will be surprised at receiving such a parcel of papers from me ; but I am willing to make amends for not writing all last month. The truth is, I had nothing particular to say at that time ; but, on my arrival at Paris, I found a letter from my friend Reviczki, with a very spirited ode composed by him on the marriage of the archduchess. I dare say lord Spencer will like it, and I therefore take the liberty to enclose it for him. I have also sent with it the baron's letter to me, which will serve as a comment upon many parts of the ode. You will have heard of the shocking accidents that happened here the night of the fire-works : above one hundred and thirty people were killed ; and several people of fashion were crushed to death in their carriages. We had the good fortune to arrive here two days after this dreadful catastrophe ; which perhaps has saved some of us, if not from real danger, at least from the apprehension of it. We shall not be sorry to see England again, and hope to have that pleasure very soon. Soon after my return, I think of going to Oxford for a short time : but if

lord Althorpe goes back to school this summer, (as I sincerely hope he will) I shall not go to college till August; for I am convinced that a public school has already been, and will continue to be, of the highest advantage to him in every respect. While Mrs. Poyntz stayed at Lyons, I made an excursion to Geneva, in hopes of seeing Voltaire, but was disappointed: I sent him a note, with a few verses, implying that the *Muse of Tragedy* had left her ancient seat in Greece and Italy, and had fixed her abode on the borders of a lake, &c. He returned this answer: "The worst of French poets and philosophers is almost dying; age and sickness have brought him to his last day; he can converse with nobody, and entreats Mr. Jones to excuse and pity him. He presents him with his humble respects." But he was not so ill as he imagined; for he had been walking in his court, and went into his house just as I came to it. The servants showed me somebody at a window, who they said was he; but I had scarce a glimpse of him. I am inclined to think that Voltaire begins to be rather serious, when he finds himself upon the brink of eternity; and that he refuses to see company, because he cannot display his former wit and sprightliness. I find my book* is published: I am not at all solicitous about its success: as I did not choose the subject myself, I am not answerable for the wild extravagance of the style, nor for the faults of the original; but if your ladyship takes the trouble to read the dissertation at the end, you may

* Translation of the Life of Nadir Shah.

perhaps find some new and pleasing images. The work has one advantage—it is certainly authentic. Lady Georgiana is so good as to inquire how Soliman goes on ; * pray tell her he is in great affliction, as he begins to suspect the innocence of Mustapha, who is just slain. To be serious, my tragedy is just finished ; and I hope to show it to your ladyship in a short time.

I am, &c.

WILLIAM JONES.

De La Fontaine is with us : he seems very well, but is still weak and complaining. I must add a little stroke of French courage, which I have just heard. In the midst of all the disasters of the fireworks, the *maréchal de Richelieu* was in such a panic, that he got out of his carriage, and screamed out, "*Est-ce qu'on veut laisser périr un maréchal de France ? N'y a-t il personne pour secourir un maréchal de France ?*"—This will be an eternal joke against him !

* He here alludes to a tragedy entitled *Soliman*, which he was then writing.

XVIII.

*To C. Reviczki.**

Spa, July, 1770.

WHAT an idle, unsettled fellow I am ! I fly over Europe, scarcely stopping any where. We passed the winter at Nice, enjoyed the spring in France, and I am now spending the summer (if this rainy season may be so called) on the borders of Germany. I certainly can, without any risk, send your manuscripts from this place ; and I advise you by all means to publish them : they are worthy of your acknowledged talents, and will insure you the applause of all the learned. I say this without flattery, which is indeed foreign to my character. The criticisms which I sent to you are full of errors, and you must receive them with great allowance ; for, during my residence at Nice, I was wholly without ancient books, or other aids, to which I am in the habit of applying ; nor do I now possess them.

I have received your French letter, with an incomparable ode : I was particularly charmed with that happy transition in it—

• Written in Latin.

O'er kindred, or o'er friendship's bier,
Affection pours a transient tear :—
Soon flies the cloud ; the solar rays
Disperse the gloom, and brighter blaze.

Believe me, when I read these lines, I could scarcely restrain my tears ; for nature has that power over me, that I am more affected by the beauties of a tender simplicity, than by the loftiest figures of poetry ; and hence I am more delighted with a passage in the first Pythian ode of the divine Pindar, concerning the Muses, than by his elaborate description of the eagle and *Ætna*.

What shall I send in return for your present ? Accept the accompanying ode, which is at least valuable for its antiquity. You will perhaps smile ; it is not an epithalamium on the marriage of Antoinette, the dauphiness, but contains the eulogium of a very ancient Chinese monarch, whose name, though a monosyllable only, I have forgotten. When I read the works of Confucius, translated by Couplet and others, I was struck with admiration at the venerable dignity of the sentiments, as well as at the poetical fragments, which adorn the discourses of that philosopher. They are selected from the most ancient records of Chinese poetry, and particularly from a work entitled *Shi-king*, of which there is a fine copy in the royal library at Paris. I immediately determined to examine the original : and referring to the volume, after a long study, I succeeded in comparing one of the odes with the version of Couplet, and analysed every word, or more properly, every figure in it. Of this ode, I

now send you a literal translation : * it is a composition of a wonderful dignity and brevity ; each verse contains four words only ; hence the ellipsis is frequent in it, and the obscurity of the style adds to its sublimity. I have annexed a poetical version, making every verse correspond with the sense of Confucius : you will judge whether I have succeeded or not ; it will be sufficient for me if it please you. You know that this philosopher, whom I may venture to call the Plato of China, lived about six hundred years before the Christian æra, and he quotes this ode as very ancient in his time : it may therefore be considered as a most precious gem of antiquity, which proves, that poetry has been the admiration of all people in all ages, and that it every where adopts the same images. I must say a few words upon another work, lest my long letter of February, containing a particular account of it from first to last, should have miscarried. I allude to the translation of the Life of Nadir Shah, from Persian into French, a most disagreeable task, which I undertook at the request of my Augustus, the king of Denmark, who, I doubt not, will verify the high expectations entertained of him in Europe. It was his special injunction, that the translation should be strictly literal ; that I should supply such notes as might be necessary ; and, finally, that I should add a short dissertation on the poetry of the

* This account of his success in deciphering an ode of Confucius, is a remarkable proof of his ardour for universal literature, and of his invincible application in the pursuit of it.

Persians. I finished this tiresome work to the best of my ability, and with such expedition, in compliance with the importunities of his majesty, that the whole book, and more particularly the dissertation, is full of errors. In the latter, I ventured to insert a translation of ten odes of Hafez, from a very splendid but incorrect manuscript, and without the aid of any commentary. I have written to the under secretary of state, requesting him to send you a copy of it as expeditiously as possible; and I trust he will not disappoint me. Excuse those errors, which I could not perhaps have avoided, if I had possessed the greatest leisure, and which the total want of it made almost inevitable. Excuse also the insertion of the two odes, which you sent to me with a French translation only; and, lastly, I must beg your excuse for the liberty which I could not avoid taking, of mentioning my friend; for I could not resist the desire of letting the king know how highly I valued you. You will greatly add to the other proofs I have experienced of your kindness towards me, by noticing the errors of the work, and particularly of the dissertation, which I mean to publish in a separate volume.

The king of Denmark, as I am informed, approves my work much, and has some honours in view for me; but of what nature I know not. When he was considering what recompence he should bestow upon me, a noble friend of mine informed his majesty, that I neither wished for nor valued money, but was anxious only for some honorary mark of his approbation.

I have directed a copy of your Treatise on the

Military Art of the Turks to be sent to his majesty, because it is worthy his perusal, and because you are the author of it. Do not suppose that I now conclude, because I have nothing more to say : my mind, in truth, overflows with matter, and I have more difficulty in restraining my pen, than to find topics for writing ; but I will not abuse and exhaust your patience with my loquacity. For my sake, take care of your health,

XIX.

*From C. Reviczki. **

Vienna, August 9, 1770.

INDEED, my dear sir, I cannot think you much to be pitied, for having passed a year in travelling through various climates and regions ; on the contrary, I think it extremely fortunate that you have had an opportunity which you are well qualified to improve. You have escaped the severity of winter in the mild and temperate climate of Italy ; you have enjoyed the spring in France and England ; and you are

• Written in French.

now spending the summer on the confines of Germany, in a place which is the general rendezvous of Europe, and where you may see, at a glance, an assemblage of various nations. Is not this delightful? Is not the great advantage of travelling, to explore the characters of different people? I can, however, easily conceive the inconvenience which a man of letters must suffer from the want of means and opportunity to pursue his studies, and this alone is sufficient to diminish the pleasure of it.

I am exceedingly obliged to you for the extraordinary composition with which you favoured me; it is indeed a literary curiosity. But pray inform me when you learned the Chinese language. I did not suspect that this was one of your accomplishments; but there are no bounds to your acquisitions as a linguist. I am the more delighted with this little performance, as I can rely upon it as a faithful translation from the Chinese language, of which the few things we have translated, appear very suspicious: it has not only the merit of being very ancient, but, in your version, appears even elegant. I impatiently expect your life of Nadir Shah; and I beg you to accept my thanks for your attention, in requesting the under secretary of state to forward a copy of it to me; nor am I less anxious to peruse the essay which you have annexed to it, on Oriental Poetry. I admire your condescension in submitting this work to my criticism: you must be sensible that you incur little risk by it, and that you are sure of my approbation; I shall however be obliged to point out one fault, which is no trifle—your mentioning me in such honourable terms. I

have no claim to this distinction, although, if I had foreseen your intention, I would have at least exerted myself to deserve it. There are several of our Vienna ladies and gentlemen now at Spa, who are all well worthy of your acquaintance. I am informed that lady Spencer is an intimate friend of the princess Esterhazy; she can introduce you to the acquaintance of an amiable and respectable lady, who knows how to estimate the value of persons of merit. I have nothing at present worth troubling you with; I reserve this pleasure for a future opportunity; and, in the mean time, am, with great respect and veneration,

Your very humble servant,

RAVICZKI.

XX.

*From C. Reviczki.**

Vienna, Oct. 16, 1770.

ALTHOUGH your last letter gives me no information of your intended destination after your departure from Spa, I conclude, from your very silence, that you are now in London. This opinion is confirmed by the late receipt of your letter. I was deprived of the pleasure of hearing from you during my excursion into Hungary; nor did your letter reach me till after my return to Vienna, long subsequent to its date, and when the subject of it was in fact obsolete. Most sincerely do I hope that your wishes may be gratified; and that, after so much travelling, I may have the pleasure of seeing you at Vienna.

The French are light and frivolous, the Italians effeminate and enervate, and the Germans may perhaps be dull and morose: yet they are not on this account to be despised; for if nature has not endowed them with the more elegant qualities, they possess what is more valuable, and win the

* Written in Latin.

affections of strangers by plain dealing and simplicity of manners.

I give this testimony to the character of the Germans, without partiality, for I am as much a stranger in Germany as I lately was in England ; and no one, at all acquainted with the character and country of the Germans and Hungarians, can possibly consider them the same ; for they are not only dissimilar in disposition, language, and manners, but in their very nature. I will not, however, dissemble, but candidly confess the truth—that my way of life here is extremely pleasant ; nor have I any doubt, that you, who are so accurate a judge of mankind, will one day readily subscribe to my opinion of this nation.

I smile at your declaration that you are changed, and that you hope to be more agreeable to me, from having renounced youthful gratifications, and devoted yourself to the cultivation of literature and the pursuit of virtue ; for my own part, I only wish to find you again precisely the same as when I knew and admired you in England, faultless and irreproachable. I confess, indeed, that what I particularly valued in you, was the happy talent of blending pleasure and recreation with the most intense study and thirst for literature.

Take care, however, that you do not suffer the ardour of application to deprive you of the gratifications of life, sufficiently brief in their own nature : they are indeed so connected with literature, that the wise and the learned only are qualified for the true enjoyment of them. Take care, also, that

you have not hereafter reason to complain, in the words of Horace,

Ah why, while slighted joys I vainly mourn—
Why will not youth, with youthful thoughts, return?

The chastity of the Muses, and their enmity to Venus, is a mere fable adapted to fiction; “for poetry delights to repose on downy pillows.” I now turn to another subject. I have not yet received your translation of the Persian manuscript which you promised me, and which indeed you seem to have sent: what has delayed its arrival, I know not, and will trouble you to inquire about it.

I have read again and again the beautiful English song, with your elegant translation of it in two languages, and I am delighted with it. I wonder, however, that you are so little satisfied with the Latin version of it, with which I am highly pleased.

XXI.

*To C. Reviczki.**

March 17, 1771.

A PLAGUE on our men in office, who for six months have amused me with idle promises, which I see no prospect of their fulfilling, that they would forward my books, and a letter to you! They say, that they have not yet had an opportunity; and that the apprehension of a Spanish war (which is now no more) furnishes them with incessant occupation. I have, however, so much to say to you, that I can no longer delay writing; I wish, indeed, I could communicate it in person. On my late return to England, I found myself entangled, as it were, in a variety of important considerations. My friends, companions, relations, all attacked me with urgent solicitations, to banish poetry and Oriental literature for a time, and apply myself to oratory and the study of the law; in other words, to become a barrister, and pursue the track of ambition. Their advice, in truth, was conformable to my own inclinations; for the only road to the highest stations in this country is that of the law;

* Written in Latin.

and I need not add, how ambitious and laborious I am. Behold me then become a lawyer, and expect, in future, that my correspondence will have somewhat more of public business in it: but if it ever should be my fortune to have any share in administration, you shall be my Atticus, the partner of my plans, the confidant of my secrets. Do not, however, suppose, that I have altogether renounced polite literature. I intend shortly to publish my English poems; and I mean to bring my tragedy of Soliman on the stage, when I can find proper actors for the performance of it. I intend also composing an epic poem, on a noble subject, under the title of Britanneis: but this I must defer until I have more leisure, with some degree of independence. In the mean time I amuse myself with the choicest of the Persian poets; and I have the good fortune to possess many manuscripts, which I have either purchased or borrowed from my friends, on various subjects, including history, philosophy, and some of the most celebrated poetry of Persia.

I am highly delighted with Jami's poem of Yusef and Zuleika: it contains somewhat more than four thousand couplets, each of which is a star of the first brilliance. We have six copies of this work at Oxford, one of which is correct; it has the vowel points, and is illustrated with the notes of Golius. I also possess a copy, which, as soon as I have leisure, I will print. Let me ask, in the mean time, how you are employed? Do you continue your occupation of elucidating your favourite Hafez? I will most willingly give all the assistance in my power to the publication of your work, if you will have it printed in London; but

I scarcely think that any printer will undertake it at his own expense, unless the poems are accompanied with an English or French translation; for you cannot conceive how few English gentlemen understand Latin. Let me recommend to you, therefore, to give a literal version of Hafez in French, with annotations in the same language; and this I think will be more acceptable even to your own countrymen, than a Latin translation; though indeed you may annex to your work such odes as you have translated into that language. The new edition of Meninski goes on tolerably well. I enclose a specimen of the new Arabic types, and earnestly beg your opinion upon them, that any defects may be corrected as soon as possible. I have had a copper-plate engraving made of one of the odes of Hafez, and may, perhaps, when my circumstances afford it, print an edition of Jami's whole poem in the same manner. A work of this kind, on silken paper, would, I doubt not, be very acceptable to the governor of Bengal, and the other principal persons in India. I cannot conceive what is become of the book which I sent to you; but I will take the first opportunity of transmitting a fairer and more correct copy, together with my little Treatise on the Literature of Asia, and my Grammar of the Persian Language, which is printed with some degree of elegance; and I earnestly entreat you to tell me, if any thing is wrong in it, or any thing omitted, that the next edition may be more perfect. I only wait for leisure to publish my Commentaries on Asiatic Poetry.

Do not however imagine that I despise the usual enjoyments of youth; no one can take more de-

light in singing and dancing than I do, nor in the moderate use of wine, nor in the exquisite beauty of the ladies, of which London affords an enchanting variety; but I prefer glory, my supreme delight, to all other gratifications, and I will pursue it through fire and water, by day and by night. O my Charles! (for I renounce all ceremony, and address you with ancient simplicity), what a boundless scene opens to my view! If I had two lives, I should scarcely find time for the due execution of all the public and private projects which I have in mind!

XXII.

*To D. B.**

London, April, 1771.

YOUR Persian book is more valuable than the costliest jewel. Meninski, that universal scholar, has a copy exactly like yours, and he describes it in his usual manner, that is, inelegantly, and in miserable Latin. From his description, you may however estimate the real excellence of your book. I shall beg leave to say something more about it myself;

* Written in Latin.

and, as a poet, venture to affirm, that the six most beautiful poems in the volume are far more valuable for their intrinsic merit, than for the elegance of the characters in which they are written, or for the glowing tints of the pictures which adorn them.

The author of these poems was the very celebrated Nezami, who assumed the name of Kenjavi: he flourished towards the close of the twelfth century, and was the favourite of that illustrious warrior and patron of literature, Togrul, the son of Erslan.

The book comprises five poems, the last of which is divided into two parts: the first, which is entitled, *The Treasury of Secrets*, contains many fables, and various discourses on moral duties and human affairs: Nushirovan, king of Persia, who, towards the end of the sixth century, waged a successful war against the first Justin, and Justinian, are frequently introduced in it; Mohammed, the legislator of Arabia, was born during his reign, and praises him for his justice in the Coran. The Persian poets, Sadi, Hafez, Jami, and others, frequently extol his virtues, and one of them has this couplet:

For ages mingled with his parent dust,
Fame still records Nushirovan the Just.

The second poem commemorates the lives of a most amiable youth (named Mujnoon, or the Frantic, from his mad passion), and his mistress, the beautiful Leili. The loves of Khosro and the adorable Sherin, form the subject of the third poem. Khosro

was the twenty-third in descent from Sassan, and the grandson of Nushirovan. The fourth poem has the title of The Seven Figures, and recites the history of King Beharam, whom the Greeks, with their usual inaccuracy, call Varanes : but it more particularly describes his seven palaces, each of which is said to have been distinguished by a particular colour. In the fifth, we have the life and actions of Alexander : it is however to be remarked, that the Asiatics perpetually confound the Macedonian monarch with another and very ancient king of the same name, and blend their actions most ridiculously. Thus much about your book ; and you may depend upon what I say as certain, and not conjectural. I sincerely rejoice, that St. John's college, at Cambridge, will possess this treasure by your gift ; and I no less sincerely hope, that your own university will boast some future scholar, capable of thoroughly understanding the elegance of the charming Nezami. If any one wishes to obtain farther information respecting this poet, let him consult the pleasing work of Dowlut Shah of Samercand, on the lives of the Persian poets. I saw a beautiful manuscript of it at Paris.

Farewell.

XXIII.

To John Wilmot, Esq.

Univ. Coll. Oxford, June 3, 1771.

MY DEAR WILMOT,

It makes me very happy to hear that my lord chief justice does not retire on account of ill health, but from a motive which does him the highest honour. He will now enjoy the greatest happiness of human life, ease with dignity, after having passed through the most honourable labour without danger. I should think myself highly blessed, if I could pursue a similar course in my small sphere; and, after having raised a competency at the bar, could retire to the bowers of learning and the arts.

I have just begun to contemplate the stately edifice of the laws of England,—

The gather'd wisdom of a thousand years.

if you will allow me to parody a line of Pope. I do not see why the study of the law is called dry and unpleasant; and I very much suspect that it seems so to those only who would think any study unplea-

sant, which required a great application of the mind, and exertion of the memory. I have read most attentively the first two volumes of Blackstone's Commentaries, and the two others will require much less attention. I am much pleased with the care he takes to quote his authorities in the margin, which not only give a sanction to what he asserts, but point out the sources to which the student may apply for more diffusive knowledge. I have opened two common-place books, the one of the law, the other of oratory, which is surely too much neglected by our modern speakers: I do not mean the popular eloquence, which cannot be tolerated at the bar; but that correctness of style, and elegance of method, which at once please and persuade the hearer. But I must lay aside my studies for about six weeks, while I am printing my Grammar, from which a good deal is expected, and which I must endeavour to make as perfect as a human work can be. When that is finished, I shall attend the Court of King's Bench very constantly, and shall either take a lodging in Westminster, or accept the invitation of a friend in Duke-street, who has made me an obliging offer of apartments.

I am sorry the characters you sent me are not Persian, but Chinese, which I cannot decipher without a book, which I have not at present; but *tous Chinois qu'ils sont*, I shall be able to make them out, when the weather will permit me to sit in the Bodleian. In the mean time, I would advise you to inquire after a native of China, who is now in London; I cannot recollect where he lodges, but shall know when I come to town, which will be to-morrow or Saturday. I shall be at Richardson's

till my Grammar is finished, unless I can buy a set of chambers in the Temple, which I fear will be difficult. I will certainly call upon you in a day or two. On one of the Indian pictures at your house there was a beautiful copy of Persian verses, which I will beg leave to transcribe, and should be glad to print it, with a translation, in the Appendix to my Grammar. I have not yet had my Persian proposals engraved; but, when you write to your brother, you would much oblige me by desiring him to send me a little Persian manuscript, if he can procure it without much trouble. It is a small poem which I intend to print: we have six or seven copies of it at Oxford; but if I had one in my possession, it would save me the trouble of transcribing it: I have enclosed its title in Persian and English. I am very glad that your family are well: I wish them joy upon every occasion. My mother and sister desire their compliments to you; and I am, with great regard,

Yours, most affectionately,

WILLIAM JONES.

XXIV.

To Mr. Hawkins.

Nov. 5, 1771.

I SHALL ever gratefully acknowledge, dear sir, my obligation to you for the trouble you take in inspecting my trifles. Had Dryden and other poets met with such a friend, their poems would have been more polished, and consequently more fit to see the light. Your observations are so judicious, that I wish you had not been so sparing of them. I entirely approve of all your corrections, &c.

As to the years in which the poems were written, they are certainly of no consequence to the public; but (unless it be very absurd), I would wish to specify them; for it would hurt me as a student at the bar, to have it thought that I continue to apply myself to poetry; and I mean to insinuate that I have given it up for several years, which I must explain more fully in the preface: for a man who wishes to rise in the law, must be supposed to have no other object.*

* The small volume of poems here alluded to, consisting chiefly of translations from the Asiatic language, was published in 1772. We may smile at the solicitude which Mr.

XXV.

*To C. Reviczki.**

Oxford, Dec. 1771.

THIRTEEN months, or rather, I may say years, have elapsed, without a line from my friend! I have, however, written to you twice; once and very fully in Latin, last March, and again in July, in a great hurry, in French. These letters contained a detailed account of my occupations and views, of the profession which I had adopted, and of the splendid objects to which I ambitiously looked forward. You have, I trust, received my four books, which Mr. Whitchurch, chaplain to our ambassador, at my request, promised to deliver to you at Vienna. I recommend him to your particular attention, as a young man of an excellent disposition, and very fond of literature. This will be presented to you by Mr. Drummond, a man of letters, who proceeds to Vienna for the purpose of studying physic. You know that the medical profession is

Jones expresses, to avoid the imputation of devoting to the Muses that time which belonged to his professional studies.

* Written in Latin.

held in the highest estimation with us ; and, as Homer says,

A wise physician high distinction claims,

your reception of them both will, I hope, do credit to my recommendation.

I beg your acceptance also of a little Philippic, which I wrote against an obscure coxcomb, who had the audacity to abuse our university, not with impunity, I trust, if the edge of my discourse have any effect upon the senseless knave. "I have disquieted" (as Cicero says of his Commentaries); "the French nation." * How goes on Hafez, our mutual delight? Shall we never see your translation of his charming odes? Tell me, if you like my English version of the second ode? † it has been favourably received by my own countrymen. I should like to translate several more of his odes, but I want leisure.

I have not yet found any translator capable of doing justice to your Treatise on the Military Art of the Turks. All agree that your preface is both learned and elegant; but they urge, as you yourself remark in the introduction, that the book does not correspond with its title—The Principles of the Science of Government.

The original of this work in the Turkish language, with many others printed at Constantinople, including a most beautiful copy of the Odes of

* This was a letter in French addressed to M. Anquetil du Perron, and printed in 1771.

† See Sir W. Jones's Works, vol. ii. p. 244.

Meslhi, are deposited in the library of our Royal Society. I beg to be informed, if all the works published by Ibrahim, which you so much commend, are to be purchased in Germany, Hungary, or the eastern parts of Turkey; as, in that case, I should wish to procure them.

What news from Turkey? no mention of peace? Whenever the war with Russia is at an end, I propose making an open and direct application for the office of minister at Constantinople; at present, I can only privately whisper my wishes. The king is very well disposed towards me; so perhaps are the men in power; and the Turkish Company wish much to oblige me: all that I have to apprehend, is the appearance of some powerful competitor, who may drive me off the stage. If I should succeed in my wishes, how shall I bound for joy! First, I shall enjoy your company at Vienna, then I shall drink deep of Asiatic literature, and I shall explore the Turkish manners in their most hidden sources. If I am disappointed, philosophy remains; the bar is open; and I shall not, I trust, want employment; for the harvest of litigation is always abundant. I shall apply to the study of eloquence, to poetry, history, and philosophy, each of which, if properly cultivated, would occupy a complete life of

Such men as live in these degenerate days.

I could say much more, but I yield to the imperious summons (not of Proserpine, I hope, but) of the goddess, if there be one, who presides over our tri-

business. You may expect longer letters in future from me : and, in the mean time, I hope to hear very fully from you.

Farewell, my dear friend.

XXVI.

To Mr. Hawkins.

Westminster, Jan. 16, 1772.

As I have a frank directed to you, I take the liberty to enclose a letter for my mother, which I beg you will be so kind as to send to her. I have nothing at present to say on the subject of my publication, except that you will be so good as to send me the sheets of the Essays, under cover, to Mr. Brudenell, lest there should be any thing that may be altered. I entreat you also to criticise my prose, as you have done my verse, and to reprimand me severely, where you find it stiff, forced, or obscure. I forgot to mention another respectable scholar, who saw and approved my poems ; I mean the present bishop of St. Asaph,* whose learning, to say a great deal, is as extensive as his virtues are ami-

* The Rev. Dr. Shipley, whose daughter Mr. Jones afterwards married.

able. Dr. Warton, of Winchester, is another excellent critic, through whose hands my trifles shall pass before they see the light : I have dined with him at sir Joshua Reynolds's, where he paid me a compliment before the whole company, which I cannot write without blushing : he said, my Greek poems, which he had seen in manuscript, were worthy of ancient Greece. I dare say this learned and ingenious man will suffer me to send him a copy of the poems at Winchester, and that he will make his remarks very sincerely. When I have collected the criticisms of these gentlemen, I will compare them, and add my corrections at the end, under the title of emendations, as Pope has inserted his alterations in the text of his poems, and set down the variations, or first readings, in the margin. I think it will be better (as we must not lose the season for publication) to send the copies to my friends, as soon as the trifle on Chess is printed, and to show them the prose afterwards.

My Turkish History will go to the press on Monday.* Lord Radnor has given me leave, in the most flattering terms, to inscribe it to him.

I have a notion I shall be a great talker when I am at the bar ; for I cannot take up my pen without filling three sides of paper, though I have nothing to say when I sit down.

I am, &c.

* Whether the Turkish History here mentioned was ever finished, we are not informed : part of the original manuscript still remains.

XXVII.

*To Robert Orme, Esq.**

April, 1772.

IT is impossible for me to describe the delight and admiration I have felt, from the perusal of your History of the War in India. The plans, circumstances, and events of it, are so clearly described by you, that I felt an interest in them rather as an actor than a reader. I was particularly pleased with your delineation of the lives and characters of those who had distinguished themselves by their actions or wisdom; nor was I less delighted with the elegance of your topographical descriptions: that of the Ganges particularly pleased me; it is absolutely a picture. I have remarked, that the more polished historians of all ages, as well as the poets, have been fond of displaying their talents in describing rivers. Thus Thucydides describes the Achelöus, and Xenophon the Teleboas, and both admirably, though in a different manner—the latter, with his usual brevity and elegance; the former with a degree of roughness and magnificence not uncommon to him. With respect to your style,

* Written in Latin.

if elegance consist in the choice and collocation of words, you have a most indubitable title to it; for you have, on all occasions, selected the most appropriate expressions, and have given to them the most beautiful arrangement; and this is almost the greatest praise which a composition can claim.

The publication of the second part of your History, which has been so long and earnestly looked for, will be highly acceptable to those whose opinions you respect; and I need not say, that it will add to your reputation. Indeed, it is not just, that the Coromandel coast only should receive the ornament of your pen, to the neglect of Bengal, which an Indian monarch pronounced "The delight of the world."

XXVIII.

*From Dr. Hunt.**

DEAR SIR,

Ch. Church, Nov. 28, 1771.

I RECEIVED the welcome present of your excellent pamphlet against Perron† in due time, and yesterday I was favoured with your kind letter; for both

* Laudian professor of Arabic in the university of Oxford; who had been contemptuously spoken of by M. Du Perron.

† See Letter XXV.

which I return you my hearty thanks. I should have thanked you for your pamphlet sooner, but have been out of town. I have read it over and over again, and think the whole nation, as well as the university and its members, are much obliged to you for this able and spirited defence: I acknowledge myself to be so in a particular manner, and so does Mr. Swinton, who desires his compliments and thanks. But there is one thing which Mr. Swinton seems to doubt of, which is, whether there has been such a general destruction of the writings of the ancient Persians, as you imagine there has been. For my own part, till some better proof can be given of the authenticity of those books, which have been produced as the genuine compositions of that ancient people, than what I have yet seen given, I am inclined to be of your opinion. At least, this I am sure of; that if the books which Alexander, Omar, &c. destroyed, were no better than those which have been published, the world has had no great loss; witness the insufferable jargon which you have given from their writings in the 38th and 41st, &c. pages of your letter; to which, as this bulky performance of Perron* will be but

* Mons. Anquetil du Perron made a voyage to India, in 1755, for the purpose of acquiring the ancient language of Persia, and that of the Bramins. In a discourse addressed to the Asiatic Society at Calcutta, in 1789, sir William Jones speaks of him, as "having had the merit of undertaking a voyage to India in his earliest youth, with no other view than to recover the writings of Zeratust (Zoroaster), and who would have acquired a brilliant reputation in France, if he had not sullied it by his immoderate vanity and virulence of temper, which alienated the good-will even of his own countrymen."

in few hands, it may not perhaps be amiss to add some others : but, as Mr. Swinton has suggested that he has some doubts about the fate of the writings of the old Persians, I think you would do well to consult him, before you publish your English translation.

I am glad you intend to oblige the world with an English translation of your letter ; and if, among the anecdotes which Mr. Swinton sent you, you will be so good as to insert that, wherein he says, that he was present all the time that Perron was with me, but does not remember that I ever told him that I understood the ancient Persian language, I shall be much obliged to you. I am sure I never pretended, nor could pretend, to any farther knowledge of it, than that of the alphabet, as given by Dr. Hyde.

I am, &c.

THOMAS HUNT.

XXIX.

From Dr. Hunt.

DEAR SIR,

Ch. Church, March 2, 1774.

I RETURN you my hearty thanks for your most acceptable present of your excellent book on the Asiatic Poetry. I should have made you my acknowledgments for this great favour before, but I have been so entirely engaged in reading the book (which I have done from the beginning to the end), that I have not had time to think of its worthy author any otherwise, than by tacitly admiring, as I went along, his exquisitely fine parts, and wonderful learning. Indeed, so engaging is the beautiful style of this admirable performance, and so striking the observations it contains, that it is next to impossible for a person who has any taste for this branch of literature, when he has once taken it into his hand, to lay it aside again without giving it a thorough perusal. I find you have enriched this work with a great variety of curious quotations and judicious criticisms, as well as with the addition of several valuable new pieces, since you favoured me with a sight of it before, and the pleasure which I have now had in reading it has been in proportion. I hope this new key to the

Asiatic Poetry, with which you have obliged the world, will not be suffered to rust for want of use; but that it will prove, what you intended it to be, a happy instrument in the hands of learned and inquisitive men, for unlocking the rich treasures of wisdom and knowledge which have been preserved in the Hebrew, Arabic, Persic, and the other Oriental languages; and especially the Hebrew, that venerable channel, through which the sacred compositions of the divinely inspired poets have been conveyed down to us.

I hope this will find you well; and am, &c.

THOMAS HUNT.

P. S. I have seen your proposals for printing the mathematical works of my worthy friend, your late father, and beg to be of the number of your subscribers.

XXX.

*To D. Frederico Pérez Bayer.**

March, 1774.

I HAVE received a most elegant copy of your Treatise on the Phœnician Language and Colonies, and I am at a loss to decide whether it is most learned or entertaining. Although I fear, like Diomed, that I shall give you brass in exchange for your gold ; yet I send you, as a proof of my gratitude and esteem, my Commentaries on Asiatic Poetry ; and it will afford me great satisfaction to learn that they please you.

Farewell.

* A Spanish gentleman of great learning. The letter was written in Latin.

XXXI.

*From H. A. Schultens.**

To the phoenix of his time, and the ornament of the age—health!

Amsterdam, Sept. 1774.

WHEN I reflect, my dear Jones, upon the fortunate period which I passed in your happy island, I feel the most exquisite delight at the recollection of the pleasure and improvement which I derived from your society; at the same time, my anxiety for your company excites the most lively regret at our separation. If I cannot altogether conquer it, I can at least alleviate it, by corresponding with you.

Nothing but a variety of unusual occupations could have delayed my writing to you so long after my return to Amsterdam; I was moreover apprehensive of interrupting your studies by my intrusion. The receipt of the obliging present of your Commentaries† has removed all my fear on this account, and affords me a most agreeable proof of your remembrance. Accept my sincerest thanks

* Written in Latin.

† On Asiatic Poetry, published in 1774.

for your finished and most elegant work, which I have eagerly read again and again with admiration and astonishment.

As sincere a lover as yourself of the Muses, how much I regret their unhappy lot, that whilst they have so few admirers, one of their most distinguished votaries should be seduced from their service by the discordant broils of the bar! Do they not then possess such charms and graces, as to merit a preference to others, who have no portion but wealth and honour? Is not their beauty so attractive, their dress so elegant and enchanting—as to fascinate their admirers to a degree, which makes them despise all others, and feel no delight but in their society? Forgive, my dear Jones, this friendly expostulation.

Two or three copies only of your work have reached us: I beg you will not suffer the inattention of booksellers to deprive us of a larger supply. You will receive shortly a little inaugural discourse which I pronounced here, "On extending the limits of Oriental Literature." It was done too much in haste to be as perfect as it ought to have been, and as I could have made it with more leisure. The office which I hold here is most agreeable to me, but is attended with this inconvenience—that the duties of it allow me no time for the pursuit of other studies; and the attention, which I am forced to bestow on grammatical institutions, on explanatory lectures on the Old Testament, and in disquisitions on the Jewish antiquities, precludes the perusal of Arabic, and still more of Persian authors. But I submit the more cheerfully to this restraint, as the assiduity of my present exertions will produce

more leisure in future; and when I have once committed to paper the mass of lectures which I have annually to repeat, I shall then be at full liberty to employ myself as I please. I have absolutely determined to publish Meidani, but it will require the labour of ten years: you well know, that without a competent knowledge, not only of the language of the East, but of Oriental history, ceremonies, and manners, it would be madness to attempt it. Whether my labours will ever have the assistance of a midwife, time must show. Professor Scheidius is employed in publishing Giewhari: the expense of the undertaking far exceeds his means; but he hopes to provide against this difficulty, by publishing one or more numbers annually, according to alphabetical arrangement; by which means the sale of each may furnish the expense of the succeeding.

I have nothing farther to communicate to you, but I most anxiously long to see you. If you have the ambition of your countryman, Banks, to expose yourself to the inclemency of winter by visiting me here, all my fear of the cold will be lost in the hope that a long and intense frost may detain you. Nothing, however, can give me more pleasure, either in winter or summer, than to have you for my guest. My wife, whom I married about five months since, is equally anxious to see a man, of whom she hears her husband perpetually talking; she, as well as my father, who received inexpressible delight in the perusal of your Commentaries, desires to be remembered to you: he entertains the highest respect and esteem for you. Let me know how you are, and whether your mother and sister are well. Do me the favour also to inform them, that

I shall ever remember with gratitude the obligations which I owe to their great politeness and attention to me. Consider me ever as the humble servant of yourself and friends.

Farewell, and love me ever.

P. S. I almost forgot to mention our Damascene prince : his name, I think, is Joseph Abas. I regret, that during his residence at this place, he only called upon me two days before his departure for Brussels. I was highly delighted with his liberal, manly, and truly Arabian spirit : neither did he appear deficient in polite literature ; but of this you are a better judge than I am. For my own part, I must ever retain a regard for a man, whose conversation so entertained and interested me under the attack of a fever, that it absolutely prevented the return of it.

XXXII.

*To H. A. Schultens.**

October, 1774.

I HAVE had the pleasure to receive your letter dated in September, which did not, however, reach me, till after my return to London from a summer excursion to the Kentish coast.

I am highly gratified by your father's and your approbation of my Commentaries, and I acknowledge the kindness of your friendly and polite expostulation, in telling me that you cannot bear to see me desert the cause of literature. But, my friend, the die is cast, and I have no longer a choice; all my books and manuscripts, with an exception of those only which relate to law and oratory, are locked up at Oxford; and I have determined, for the next twenty years at least, to renounce all studies but those which are connected with my profession. It is needless to trouble you with my reasons at length for this determination: I will only say, that if I had lived at Rome or Athens, I should have preferred the labours, stu-

* Written in Latin.

dies, and dangers of their orators and illustrious citizens, connected as they were with banishment and even death, to the groves of the poets, or the gardens of the philosophers. Here I adopt the same resolution. The constitution of England is in no respect inferior to that of Rome or Athens : this is my fixed opinion, which I formed in my earliest years, and shall ever retain. Although I sincerely acknowledge the charms of polite literature, I must at the same time adopt the sentiment of Neoptolemus in the tragedy, that we can philosophize with a few only ; and no less the axiom of Hippocrates, that life is short, art long, and time swift. But I will also maintain the excellence and the delight of other studies. What ! shall we deny that there is pleasure in mathematics, when we recollect Archimedes, the prince of geometricians, who was so intensely absorbed in the demonstration of a problem, that he did not discover Syracuse was taken ? Can we conceive any study more important, than the single one of the laws of our own country ? Let me recall to your recollection the observations of L. Crassus and Q. Scævola on this subject, in the treatise of Cicero de Oratore. What ! do you imagine the goddess of eloquence to possess less attraction than Thalia or Polyhymnia ; or have you forgotten the epithets which Ennius bestows on Cethegus—the quintessence of eloquence, and the flower of the people ? Is there a man existing, who would not rather resemble Cicero (whom I wish absolutely to make my model, both in the course of his life and studies), than be like Varro, however learned, or

Lucretius, however ingenious as a poet? If the study of the law were really unpleasant and disgusting, which is far from the truth, the example of the wisest of the ancients, and of Minerva herself, the goddess of wisdom, and protectress of Athens, would justify me in preferring the fruitful and useful olive to the barren laurel.

To tell you my mind freely, I am not of a disposition to bear the arrogance of men of rank, to which poets and men of letters are so often obliged to submit. Accept this friendly reply to your friendly expostulation; and believe my assurances, that I entertain the highest value for your esteem, of which I have received so many proofs. I most anxiously expect your dissertation. May the Almighty prosper your labours, and particularly your laborious task of Meidani! May the most learned Scheidius persevere with resolution in completing the gigantic work which he meditates! I admire his most laudable industry; but after the fate of Meninski (I do not speak of his works, but of his fortunes), no prudent man (for he that is not wise to himself is wise to no end) will venture to expose his vessel to the perils of shipwreck in so uncertain a sea. The work is worthy of a king, but the expense of it will require the revenue of a king.

My mother and sister cordially unite with me in congratulations on your marriage, and I beg you to make my compliments to your amiable consort, and most respectable father. I thank you for your invitation to Amsterdam, and assure you that I should be most happy to avail myself of it. In your

society, I should prefer a winter in Holland to the gardens of the Hesperides, nor indulge a wish for the vales of Tempè; but my legal occupations make the summer more convenient for travelling. I promise you therefore to pass some time with you in the July or August of the next or following year.

I rejoice to find you pleased with Joseph the Syrian, and equally so that he means to travel through Germany. His history is somewhat long. If I had not exerted myself in my application to some men of rank in London, who have access to the king, he must have passed a life of misery here, or have died most wretchedly.

The bookseller keeps for you the books which you desired to purchase. You cannot as yet have received a short letter which I wrote to you in July, and sent by a young gentleman of the name of Campbell. The son of the king of Spain, Prince Gabriel, did me the honour to send me a most splendid copy of his Sallust, for which I returned my grateful acknowledgments.

You have doubtless heard of the travels of Mr. Bruce, a native of Scotland, into Syria, Arabia, Abyssinia, Nubia, and Egypt. He is as well acquainted with the coast of the Red Sea, and the sources of the Nile, as with his own house. He has brought with him some Æthiopic manuscripts, and amongst them the prophecies of Enoch, an ancient book, but to be ranked only with the Sibylline oracles.

Whilst I was writing this letter, a person called upon me with a manuscript, which he had received at Venice from Mr. Montague, a man of family. I

immediately perceived it to be a most beautiful and correct copy of Motanabbi, with a letter addressed to myself in Arabic verse, from some person named Abdurrahman, whom Mr. Montague had probably seen in Asia. I owe great obligations to the politeness of the learned Arab, but I by no means think myself worthy of his exaggerated encomiums; but you know the pompous style of the Orientals. Do not suppose that I have any present intention of reading the poems of Motanabbi; that must be reserved for Oxford, when I have leisure to attend to this, and my other treasures of the same kind. Believe my assurance, that I entertain the highest esteem for you, and that nothing will give me greater pleasure than to hear from you frequently and at length. Take care of your health, and continue your regard for me.

XXXIII.

From Mr. Howard.

SIR,

Paris, September 13, 1774.

As my stay here may be considerably longer than I at first proposed, it is a duty incumbent on me to acquit myself of a charge committed to my care in the month of June last by Mr. Montague, at Venice, by transmitting to you the manuscript which accompanies this letter. I should indeed have sent it to you much sooner; but the hopes I had of an earlier return to England, was the cause of my postponing it, that I might myself have had the pleasure of delivering it, which I flattered myself might have served as an introduction to the honour of your acquaintance—a happiness which, without compliment, I have long been very ambitious of. But as my affairs are likely to detain me some time longer in this city, I cannot, with any propriety, prefer my own interest to a more material one; nor ought I longer to injure the public, by depriving them of the pleasure and advantage they may reap from this manuscript's coming to your hands. Mr. Montague loaded me with com-

pliments to you, meant as real testimonies of the esteem he has for you ; which I am very unfortunate in not having the pleasure of delivering.

I have the honour to be, &c.

MID. HOWARD.

XXXIV.

To Mr. Howard,

SIR,

Oct. 4, 1774.

I CANNOT express how much I am flattered by the kind attention with which you honour me. I have just received your most obliging letter, with a fine Arabic manuscript, containing the works of a celebrated poet, with whom I have been long acquainted : this testimony of Mr. Montague's regard is extremely pleasing to me, and I have a most grateful sense of his kindness. I am conscious how little I have deserved the many honours I have lately received from the learned in Europe and Asia : I can ascribe their politeness to nothing but their candour and benevolence. I fear they will think me still less deserving, when they know that I have *deserted*, or rather *suspended*, all literary

pursuits whatever, and am wholly engaged in the study of a profession, for which I was always intended. As the law is a jealous science, and will not have any partnership with the Eastern Muses, I must absolutely renounce their acquaintance for ten or twelve years to come. This manuscript, however, is highly acceptable to me, and shall be preserved among my choicest treasures, till I have leisure to give it an attentive perusal. There is a compliment to me, written in Arabic verse, in the first leaf of the book, and signed Abdurrahman Beg : the verses are very fine, but so full of Oriental pægyric, that I could not read them without blushing. The present seems to come from the learned Arabian ; but as he has not inserted my name in his verses, and speaks of Oxford, he must have heard me mentioned by Mr. Montague, to whom therefore I am equally indebted for the present. If I knew Mr. Montague's direction, I would send him a letter of thanks for his indulgence to me, and would also return my compliments in Arabic to his Asiatic friend, who seems to have sent the book. Before your return to England, I shall probably be removed to the Temple, where I shall wait impatiently for the pleasure of seeing you.

I am, &c.

WILLIAM JONES.

XXXV.

*From Mr. Waddilove.**

SIR,

St. Ildefonso, Aug. 1, 1774.

UPON my arrival at Madrid, I delivered your present of your Asiatic Commentaries to my friend Dr. Francisco Perez Bayer : he desires me to return you his compliments and thanks for your politeness to him, and begs your acceptance of a copy of the Infant Don Gabriel's Sallust, which he accordingly sent to me the night before we left Madrid. As we shall not be there again till next Christmas, I shall have no opportunity of forwarding it to you very soon : whenever any one offers, you may depend upon receiving it ; but as this probably will not be before next spring, I hope you will not defer acknowledging the favour till then. If you should wish to see the Sallust before you write again to Mr. Bayer, you will find a copy in the Museum. If you have had any time to examine the Dissertation upon the Phœnician language, &c. Dr. F. P. Bayer will be glad of any remarks upon it, as a new edition of it in Latin will soon be printed. He has a curious

* Now the Rev. Robert Darley Waddilove, D.D. dean of Ripon.

collection of Samaritan coins, and is now employed upon that subject; and if he could be prevailed upon to publish more of his inquiries into the antiquities of this and other countries, the learned world would be much indebted to him. Casiri is engaged at present in deciphering Moorish inscriptions, which have been found in different parts of Spain: some are already engraved, but not yet published. He reduces first the characters to the modern Arabic, and then gives a translation and comment in Latin. Your Sallust is unbound, and you have already the dissertation to add to it.

I am, &c.

R. D. WADDILOVE.

XXXVI.

*To F. P. Bayer.**

Oct. 4, 1774.

I CAN scarcely find words to express my thanks for your obliging present of a most beautiful and splendid copy of Sallust, with an elegant Spanish translation. You have bestowed upon me, a private untitled individual, an honour which heretofore has only been conferred upon great monarchs and illus-

* Written in Latin.

trious universities. I really was at a loss to decide, whether I should begin my letter by congratulating you on having so excellent a translator, or by thanking you for this agreeable proof of your remembrance. I look forward to the increasing splendour, which the arts and sciences must attain in a country, where the son of the king possesses genius and erudition capable of translating, and illustrating with learned notes, the first of the Roman historians : how few youths amongst the nobility, in other countries, possess the requisite ability or inclination for such a task ! The history of Sallust is a performance of great depth, wisdom, and dignity : to understand it well, is no small praise ; to explain it properly, is still more commendable ; but to translate it elegantly, excites admiration. If all this had been accomplished by a private individual, he would have merited applause ; if by a youth, he would have had a claim to literary honours ; but when to the title of youth, that of prince is added, we cannot too highly extol, or too loudly applaud, his distinguished merit.

Many years are elapsed since I applied myself to the study of your learned language, but I well remember to have read in it with great delight the heroic poem of Alonzo, the odes of Garcilasso, and the humorous stories of Cervantes : but I most sincerely declare, that I never perused a more elegant or polished composition than the translation of Sallust ; and I readily subscribe to the opinion of the learned author in his preface, that the Spanish language approaches very nearly to the dignity of the Latin.

May the accomplished youth continue to deserve

well of his country and mankind, and establish his claim to distinction above all the princes of the age ! If I may be allowed to offer my sentiments, I would advise him to study most diligently the divine works of Cicero, which no man, in my opinion, ever perused without improving in eloquence and wisdom. The epistle which he wrote to his brother Quintus, on the government of a province, deserves to be daily repeated by every sovereign in the world : his books on Offices, on Moral Ends, and the Tusculan Questions, merit a hundred perusals ; and his Orations, nearly sixty in number, deserve to be translated into every European language : nor do I scruple to affirm, that his sixteen books of letters to Atticus are superior to almost all histories, that of Sallust excepted. With respect to your own compositions, I have read, with great attention, and will again read, your most agreeable book. I am informed that you propose giving a Latin translation of it, and I hope you will do it for the benefit of foreigners. I see nothing in it which requires alteration,—nothing which is not entitled to praise. I much wish that you would publish more of your treatises on the antiquities of Asia and Africa : I am confident they would be most acceptable to such as study those subjects. I have only, for the present, to conclude, by bidding you farewell in my own name, and that of the republic of letters.

Farewell.

XXXVII.

*To G. S. Michaelis.**

November, 1774.

I BEG you will do me the justice to believe that I have read your books with great attention. I neither entirely admit nor reject your opinion on the fables of the Hebrews ; but, until the subject be better known and explored, I am unwilling to depart from the received opinions concerning them. Your approbation of my Commentaries gives me sincere pleasure. Nothing is more true than that I have renounced the Asiatic Muses and polite literature ; and that, for twenty years at least, I have determined neither to write nor think about them. The Forum is my lot, and the law engrosses all my attention. Be assured, however, that I shall ever retain my esteem both for yourself and your works.

Farewell.

* Written in Latin.

XXXVIII.

To Lady Spencer.

MADAM,

Duke Street.

I take the liberty to present your ladyship with a copy of my poems, and cannot refrain from acquainting you with a plain truth ; that the first of them, called Solima, would never have been written, if I had never had the honour of knowing your ladyship.

* * * *

I am just come from Harrow, where it gave me inexpressible happiness to see lord Althorpe perfectly well, extremely improved, and deservedly beloved by all, as much as by his real friend, and

Your ladyship's

most obedient and faithful servant,

WILLIAM JONES.

XXXIX.

From Lady Spencer.

SIR,

Althorpe, Jan. 10, 1775.

THE continual hurry occasioned by having a house full of company, added to my not having been quite well, has prevented my thanking you sooner for your letter : you cannot doubt of my being much flattered, at your thinking you find any resemblance between my character and that of Solima, and still more at your telling the world you do : I shall always look upon that poem as a model you have set up for my imitation, and shall only be sorry I do not approach nearer to it, especially after you have called upon me, in so public a manner, to improve myself in the ways of virtue and benevolence. I must decline your second request of criticising, as I have neither time nor talents for such an office, nor do I think your works require it.

I am delighted with your invention of the Andrometer, and wish every body would form one for themselves : it would be of infinite use to numbers of people, who, from indolence and dissipation,

rather go backwards than forwards in every useful attainment.* I am, sir, with great esteem,

Your faithful friend and humble servant,

G. SPENCER.

* The *Andrometer*, mentioned by Lady Spencer to have been invented by Mr. Jones, affords a striking specimen of the extent of his views in the acquisition of intellectual excellence. It may be defined, "a scale of human attainments and enjoyments:" he assumes seventy years as the limit of exertion or enjoyment; and, with a view to progressive improvement, each year is appropriated to a particular study or occupation. The arrangement of what was to be learned or practised, during this period, admits of a four-fold division.

The first, comprising thirty years, is assigned to the acquisition of knowledge, as preparatory to active occupation.

The second, of twenty years, is dedicated principally to public and professional employment.

Of the third, which contains ten years, the first five are allotted to literary and scientific composition, and the remainder to the continuation of former pursuits.

The last ten, constituting the fourth division, which begins with the sixty-first year, are devoted to the enjoyment of the fruits of his labours; and the conclusion of the whole is specified to be a preparation for eternity.

The *Andrometer* is to be considered as a mere sketch, never intended for publication: in the construction of it, Mr. Jones probably had a view to those objects, the attainment of which he then meditated. We are not to conclude, that the preparation for eternity, which stands at the top of the scale, was to be deferred until the seventieth year; it is rather to be considered as the object to which he was perpetually to look, during the whole course of his life, and which was exclusively to engross the attention of his latter years. Neither are we to suppose, that moral and religious lessons, which constitute the occupation of the eighth year, were from that period to be discontinued, although they are not afterwards mentioned; but the meaning of Mr. Jones probably was, that they should be seriously and regularly inculcated at an age, when the intellectual faculties had acquired

strength and expansion by preceding exercises. That the order of arrangement in the Andrometer could never be strictly adhered to in the application of our time, and cultivation of our talents, (if it were intended) is evident; but to those who, from their situation, are enabled to avail themselves of the suggestions which it furnishes, it will supply useful hints for improvement, and serve as a standard of comparison for their progress.

ANDROMETER.

	3	6	9	12	
1					Ideas received through the senses.
					Speaking & pronunciation
					Letters and spelling.
					Ideas retained in memory.
5					Reading and repeating.
					Gram. of own language.
					Memory exercised.
					Moral & religious lessons.
					Nat. hist. & experiments.
10					Dancing, music, drawing, exercises.
					Hist. of his own country.
					Latin.
					Greek.
					French and Italian.
15					Translations.
					Compositions, ver. & pro.
					Rhetoric & declamation.
					History and law.
					Logic and mathematics.
20					Rhetorical exercises.
					Philosophy and politics.
					Compos. in own language.
					Declamations continued.
					Ancient orators studied.
25					Travel and conversation.
					Speeches—bar or in parl.
					State affairs.
					Historical studies contin.
					Law and eloquence.

30	.	.	.	.	.	.	Public life.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Private and social virtues.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Habits of eloq. improved.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Philosophy resumed at lei-
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Orations published. [sure.
35	.	.	.	.	.	.	Exertions in state & parl,
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Civil knowledge mature.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Eloquence perfect.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	National rights defended.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	The learned protected.
40	.	.	.	.	.	.	The virtuous assisted.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Compositions published.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Science improved.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Parliamentary affairs.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Laws enacted & supported.
45	.	.	.	.	.	.	Fine arts patronized.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Government of his family.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Education of his children.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Vigilance as a magistrate.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Firmness as a patriot.
50	.	.	.	.	.	.	Virtue as a citizen.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Historical works.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Oratorical works.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Philosophical works.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Political works.
55	.	.	.	.	.	.	Mathematical works.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	} Continuation of former pursuits.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	
	.	.	.	.	.	.	[joyed.
60	.	.	.	.	.	.	Fruits of his labours en-
	.	.	.	.	.	.	A glorious retirement.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	An amiable family.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Universal respect.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	Consciousness of a virtu-
65	.	.	.	.	.	.	ous life.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	} Perfection of earthly happiness.
	.	.	.	.	.	.	
70	.	.	.	.	.	.	Preparation for eternity.

XL.

*To C. Reviczki. **

London, Feb. 1775.

Do not suppose that I have forgotten you, because I write to you so seldom : I have not met with any person to whom I could entrust my packet, and I have no inclination to risk my familiar letters by the post. I doubt if this will ever reach you, and I fear, therefore, to write to you on any subject with my usual freedom, as your last letter of January, from Warsaw, was delivered to me opened : it is probable that you will receive this in the same manner. I am so constantly occupied with law and politics, that I have no leisure for literature. I have published two books, and only want a safe opportunity to send them to you. Write to me, I beseech you ; for your friendship is my greatest delight. How much I wish that you were in England, or I in Germany, that we might live together !

After all, I could not think of accepting the Turkish embassy. I will live in my own country, which cannot easily spare good subjects : it is scarcely yet free from commotion. O ! how I

* Written in Latin.

should rejoice if I could see you here in a diplomatic character ! I should not then envy the monarchs of Europe or Asia.

Farewell again and again.

XLI.

*From C. Reviczki.**

IF you are fully sensible of the very great regard I entertain for you, you will then conceive how much pleasure I felt at the receipt of your highly valued letter. Incessantly occupied for a long time, I have been compelled to forego the pleasure of corresponding with you ; and I the more readily acknowledge your kindness in writing to me, when I could have no expectation of hearing from you. Though I think it more prudent not to say any thing, the disclosure of which might be attended with unpleasant consequences, I impute the opening of my letter, which you mention, rather to accident than design. Your business as a lawyer must necessarily engage your closest attention ; I cannot, therefore, ask you to write to me often ; but thus much I wish you to know—that I shall soon have more leisure for cor-

* Written in Latin.

responding with you ; as the late close of the Diet, which lasted for two years (in my estimation a century), has almost left me at liberty. So much for the affairs of this part of the world. Of what is doing in your country, your letter gives me no information ; but I hear, from other quarters, of the agitations amongst you, in consequence of the commotions in the colonies, which I consider worse than a foreign war. For my own part, I confess to you, that I am tired both of my situation and my office ; not so much on account of their difficulty, as their unpleasantness ; and all the consolation I feel arises from the hope that my present troublesome occupation will not last more than a year.

I heartily wish I were in London, and at liberty to sit seriously down to the composition of some political work on the subject of our republic : the task would be no less useful than agreeable ; indeed I can conceive nothing more pleasant than such an employment.

If, contrary to my expectations, my wish should be gratified, I hope to find you there, and to enjoy as formerly your society and conversation. I am anxious to have your last publication (the subject of which you do not mention), and doubt not that the perusal of it will afford me great pleasure. Farewell, and think of me always with affection.

XLII.

*To H. A. Schultens.**

December, 1776.

BEHOLD me now no longer a free man; me, who ever considered perfect liberty superior to every thing! Under the impression of the most eager desire to see you, I promised to visit Amsterdam this year, but I am detained in London by various and important occupations. The fact is, that I am appointed one of the sixty commissioners of bankrupts: it is an office of great use, but little emolument; it confines me, however, to London, during the greatest part of the year. Add to this, my necessary studies, my practice at the bar, and the duty of giving opinions on legal cases submitted by clients. However, I read the Grecian orators again and again, and have translated into English the most useful orations of Isæus. How go on Meidanî and Hariri? Continue, I beseech you, your labours upon them, with due regard, however, to your health.

* Written in Latin.

XLIII.

To Lord Althorpe.

Temple, Nov. 13.

As I have a few minutes of leisure this evening, can I employ them better than in writing to my friend? I hasten, my dear lord, to impart to you the pleasure I received to-day, from seeing a series of experiments exhibited by Mr. Walsh on the American eel, by which he clearly proved that the animal has a sensation wholly distinct from any of the five senses. When he announced the proposition to be demonstrated, I thought it might possibly be true, but could not conceive how a new sense could be made perceptible to any sense of mine, as I imagined it would be like talking to a deaf man of harmonic sounds, or to one who had no palate, of nectarines and pine-apples; but he produced the fullest conviction in me, that his position was, in a degree, just. His first experiment was by fixing four wires, about two inches in the water where the fish was swimming—one in each quarter of the elliptical trough; each of these wires communicated with a large glass of water, placed on a table at a little distance, though the distance signified nothing; for the experiment, had the wires been long enough, might

have been conducted in another room; while the four glasses remained separate, the gymnotus (for that is his technical name), was perfectly insensible of the wires; but in the very instant when a communication was made by an instrument between any two of the glasses, he seemed to start, and swam directly to the wires which were thus joined, paying no attention to the others, till a junction was made between them also. This could not be sight, because he did not see the wires while they were insulated, though they were equally conspicuous; it could not be feeling (at least not like our feeling) because the water was not in the least agitated; still less could it be hearing; and least of all smell, or taste. It was, therefore, a distinct electrical sense of feeling, or power of conceiving any stronger conductor than the water around him; for which reason he did not perceive the wires till their junction, because they were at the extremities of the tub, and so little in the water, that they were less powerful conductors. Several other experiments were exhibited with equal success: one of them only I will mention. A triangular instrument of brass was held over the tub, and one of the legs placed gently in the water, to which the fish was wholly inattentive, though he swam close to it; but when the other leg was immersed to complete the circulation, he instantly started. It is by this faculty that the wonderful animal has notice of his prey and of his enemies. These are pleasant amusements, and objects of a just curiosity when they fall occasionally in our way; but such experiments might have been exhibited at Paris, Madrid, or Petersburg, where the philosophers, who are

discovering new senses in other animals, are not permitted to use their own freely ; and, believe me, my dear lord, it is not by electrical experiments, nor by triangular instruments, nor by conductors of wire, that we shall be able to avert the black storm which hangs over us. Let you and I, therefore, be philosophers now and then, but citizens always ; let us sometimes observe with eagerness the satellites of Jupiter, but let us incessantly watch with jealousy the satellites of the king. Do you hear any certain intelligence concerning America ? Mr. Owen Cambridge has just informed me, that a New York Gazette is brought over, in which the late uncertain accounts are confirmed in their full extent, with this important addition, that three counties of Maryland have offered, not only submission, but assistance to general Howe. This may or may not be true.

Farewell.

XLIV.

To Lord Althorpe.

November 22.

I REJOICE, my dear friend, that you have acquired that ingenuous distrust, which Epicharmus calls *a sinew of wisdom*. It is certain that doubt impels us to inquire, and inquiry often ends in conviction. You will be able, when you come to London, to examine with the minutest *scrupulosity*, as Johnson would call it, the properties of that singular animal, who is, in the rivers of South America, what Jupiter was feigned to be among the gods, *a darter of lightning*, and should be named *αστραπηφορος*, instead of *gymnotus*. He certainly has (if an academic may venture to affirm any thing) a mode of perception peculiar to himself; but whether that perception can properly be called *a new sense*, I leave you to determine: it is a modification indeed of feeling: but are not all our senses so? I desire, however, that in this and in every thing, you will form your own judgment. As to the *παλιγγενεσία* of our noble constitution, which has happily presented itself to your imagination, the very idea fixes me with rap-

ture. No, my dear lord, never believe that any thing is impossible to virtue: no; if ten such as you conceive such sentiments as your letter contains, and express them as forcibly—if you retain these sentiments, as you certainly will when you take your place in parliament—I will not despair of seeing the most glorious of sights—a *nation freely governed by its own laws*. This I promise; that, if such a decemvirate should ever attempt to restore our constitutional liberty, by constitutional means, I would exert in their cause such talents as I have; and, even if I were oppressed with sickness, and torn with pain, would start from my couch, and exclaim with Trebonius, “If you mean to act worthily, O Romans, I am well!” The speech, you find, was composed and delivered, without my news about Maryland; it is *λογος μαλα μιν αρχικος και στρατιωτικος*,* and breathes a deliberate firmness. Lord Chatham spoke with a noble vigour for a veteran orator, and your bishop pronounced an elegant harangue: I wish lord Granby had more courage as a public speaker: all men speak highly of him; but he will never be eloquent till he is less modest. Charles Fox poured forth, with amazing rapidity, a continued invective against lord G. Germaine; and Burke was so pathetic, that many declare they saw him shed tears. The ministers in both houses were sullen and reserved; but lord Sandwich boldly contradicted the duke of Richmond, on the state of the navy. I grieve that our senate is dwindled into a school of rhetoric, where

* Too despotic and military.

men rise to display their abilities, rather than to deliberate; and wish to be admired, without hoping to convince. Adieu, my dear lord: I steal these few moments from a dry legal investigation; but I could not defer the pleasure of answering a letter, which gave me inexpressible delight.

XLV.

*From H. A. Schultens.**

May, 1777.

I KNOW not how to express my delight at the receipt of your short, but very friendly and obliging letter. I take shame to myself at having so long delayed the acknowledgment of it; and you might indeed justly censure me, for an apparent forgetfulness of your kindness towards me. This would indeed be a most serious accusation, which I cannot in any degree admit: I wish I could as fairly exculpate myself from the charge of negligence. You have now, my friend, my confession; but you will pardon me, in consideration of my promise to be more attentive

* Written in Latin.

in future. I may indeed plead occupations so incessant, that they scarcely allow me time to breathe; and have often compelled me to defer writing to you, when I most seriously intended it: you will the more readily admit this apology, when I tell you, that for five months I have never once thought of Meidani.

I have now a little respite, and mean soon to resume my work, which has been so long interrupted: the singular kindness of the superintendents of the library at Leyden, by permitting me to take home for my use, and retain as long as I please, not only the manuscript of Meidani, but any others which I may want, will much diminish the weight of my labour. With this assistance, I shall proceed, as fast as my other employments allow, to copy the manuscript, finish the indices (which are absolutely necessary to such a work), and add whatever is wanted to render it as elegant and complete as possible: it gradually advances. I most heartily wish it were in my power to bestow upon this favourite occupation, those hours which I am obliged most reluctantly to give to my various public and private lectures; but I foresee that it will still require three or four years of hard labour to collect such an ample stock of materials, as will enable me to deliver my lectures fluently, without much previous study, or "to shake them out of a bag," as the phrase is. In the mean time, Hariri lies untouched, the Arabic poets are neglected, and the soft and elegant literature of Persia (which, above all, I sincerely regret) remains unexplored: such, however, is the ardour with which you have inspired me, that I am determined,

If I enjoy life and health, at all hazards, and at the risk of singularity, to devote myself to the acquisition of it. I almost, however, despair of publishing Hariri. I had determined to give the text only from the best procurable manuscripts, annexing to it the translation of my grandfather, which is complete: this I should be able to accomplish with little sacrifice of time; and, without neglecting other business, I could give the public an useful work. But there are some, to whose judgment, as well as inclination, I owe much deference, who disapprove of this plan, and advise me not to publish the work, without extracts from Tebrizi and other grammarians, nor even without my own annotations: though I do not agree with them, I must submit to their authority, at the necessity of protracting the publication, till I can give it as they wish.

Scheidius has lately published the first part of Jaohari's Lexicon, consisting of about two hundred pages. He calculates, that the whole work will not be comprised in less than ten volumes, of a thousand pages each. Opinions about it are various. He himself foresees so little impediment in completing this immense undertaking, that he even talks of publishing Phiruzbadi, &c.; but others consider the obstacles so insuperable, that they think it never will be finished, unless it should rain gold upon him. This is all relating to the Arabic that is now going on amongst us, excepting a glossary to Hariri, Arab Shah, and the Coran, which Mr. Wilmot, a young but learned theologian, has undertaken. It will be very useful to beginners, who, from the difficulty and expense of

procuring Golius, are deterred from the study of the language. Latin and Greek literature receive more encouragement here: this neither excites my envy nor surprise; but I should be still more reconciled to it, if some small part of this patronage were to overflow upon the Orientalists. Ruhnkenius is at work upon Velleius Paterculus, Burman on Propertius, Wytttenbach on Plutarch, Tollius upon the Homeric Lexicon of Apollonius, an edition of which has been published by Villoison in France. The epistles of Phalaris, respecting the author of which your countrymen Boyle and Bentley had such a controversy, will soon be published. Have you seen the very elegant essay of Ruhnkenius, on the Life and Writings of Longinus? Many copies have been sent to England;—if you wish to have one, I will take an opportunity of procuring it for you. In the course of a few weeks, a critical miscellany will appear, and it is intended to publish two or three numbers of it annually. This publication has a double view; to notice the best new books on every subject which relate to learned antiquity, and to introduce occasionally new and unpublished compositions. The authors are unknown, or rather wish to be so; for some of them will certainly be discovered by their superior erudition, and uncommon elegance of style. I am sufficiently acquainted with them to affirm confidently that the work will please you. With some of the persons concerned in it, I am intimately connected, and they have requested me to recommend to them some London bookseller, to whom a few copies may be sent for sale: for this purpose, I have thought of Elmsley, who will probably have

no objection to try the success of the work in England, by taking twenty, or even fewer copies. I wish, however, in the first place, to mention the business to you, that Elmsley, or some other, by your interest, may be the more readily induced to undertake it. There is also another favour of more importance, which my friends, through my agency, anxiously hope to obtain from you; the circumstance is this: upon their expressing a wish, that their miscellany should contain extracts from Oriental authors, particularly Persic and Arabic, I recommended to them, as there are but few works of this nature; and still fewer worthy of notice, that they should leave a space for short dissertations, under the head of tracts, or essays, or any other title, by which they may be communicated, as a means of promoting these studies. I promised, for my own part, to contribute some biographical memoirs from Eben Cháli Khán, if they should have nothing better to insert. They approved my advice, and earnestly entreated me to prevail upon you to furnish them with some essays of this kind; adding, that they would prove the greatest ornament and recommendation of this part of the work; and that if I really enjoyed your friendship, which I was perpetually asserting, I could not fail of obtaining this favour from you. You see, my friend, to what I have been led, by boasting of your regard for me. I have yielded the more readily to their solicitations, in the hopes of retrieving by it, in some degree, the heavy loss which we sustained in you: I therefore most earnestly entreat and beseech you, by your ancient love of the Oriental Muses, who so feelingly and fondly regret you, not

to omit any convenient opportunity of gratifying our wishes. Examine your shelves ;—you will find many things ready, and sufficiently perfect for publication. Whatever you send will be most acceptable, and it shall appear in our miscellany with or without your name, as you may think proper. If you have any thing in English, and want time to turn it into Latin, I will readily undertake the translation of it, and submit it to the examination of others who are better scholars than myself, that your reputation may suffer no impeachment from it. Nothing shall be added, omitted, or changed ; but it shall appear exactly as you send it : to this, if you think it necessary, I will pledge my word. I hope it will not be inconvenient to you to favour me with an early reply to this letter, and I rely upon your obliging acquiescence in our request.

I congratulate you upon your new office, as an introduction to something more honourable and lucrative ; and as to the loss of your liberty, I regret it rather on my account, than on yours. No one, not even an Englishman, can object to service for the public good, which is the just recompence of virtue and merit. To me, however, your confinement is grievous ; for, if I was disappointed in the expectation of seeing you, when you were your own master, I can scarcely now indulge a distant hope of that pleasure. Do not, however, leave me in despair : you have fifty-nine associates ; some interval of leisure may occur ; and if it should, do not neglect it ; but run over, and make us happy by the enjoyment of your company and conversation. It is not for want of inclination that I do not pay you another visit : the recollection of the pleasure I

had in your society, is so strongly impressed upon me, that I have nothing more anxiously at heart, than to fly over to you with all speed, that I may again enjoy it : neither is it want of time that detains me ; for my office, which exclusively occupies me for nine months, leaves me at liberty the remaining three. What is it then ? I will tell you the truth, nor blush to reveal to my friend, “ that, when my purse is heavier, I shall find the journey to you lighter.” *

The soil of Oriental literature in Holland, as elsewhere, is barren : it produces only the mere conveniences of life, but no superfluities whatever : I must therefore defer all hope of accomplishing a journey to England, without some unexpected improvement of my circumstances. I shall, however, bear my lot, whatever it may be, with patience. Having mentioned this subject to you, I will add something in which you may essentially serve me. With a view to improving my fortune, and procuring that affluence, which, though it may be dispensed with, is most acceptable to those who possess it, I have determined to undertake the charge of a pupil, to receive him into my house, and superintend his morals and education. I am particularly anxious, however, that he should be of your country, not only because the system of private education is little known or followed here, but because it would be more agreeable to me to part with my liberty to an Englishman (you see how openly I speak), from whom I might expect a more substan-

* An Arabic proverb, adapted to the situation of the writer.

tial recompence. My paper will not allow me to say much more. Oblige me with a few lines in reply: I am certain you will willingly assist me as far as you can ; and you may depend upon the strictest attention, on my part, to any request from you which I can possibly execute. My wife sends her best compliments to your excellent mother and sister. Farewell, my dear Jones ; and continue to honour me with your esteem.

H. A. SCHULTENS.

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XLVI.

*To H. A. Schultens.**

July, 1777.

I SHOULD have great pleasure in complying with your kind and friendly request, by furnishing my contribution to the new work which is soon to appear amongst you, and would exert myself for this purpose, but that the absolute want of leisure makes it impossible. My law employments, attendance in the courts, incessant studies, the arrange-

* Written in Latin.

ment of pleadings, trials of causes, and opinions to clients, scarcely allow me a few moments for eating and sleeping. I thank you sincerely for your very entertaining account of your own occupations, and of what is going on in your country. If I should hear of any wealthy English gentleman who wishes to send his son as a pupil to Holland, to study literature, you may rely upon my recommendation of your merits, as well as upon my assistance on all occasions. I must, however, at the same time tell you, that an opportunity of this nature is very uncertain.

XLVII.

To Lord Althorpe.

MY DEAR LORD,

Bath, Dec. 28, 1777.

I TOLD you, when I had the pleasure of seeing you in London, that it was doubtful whether I should pass my vacation at Amsterdam or at Bath: the Naiads of the hot springs have prevailed, you see, over the nymphs of the lakes, and I have been drinking the waters for a month, with no less pleasure than advantage to my health; the improvement of which I ascribe, however, in great measure, to my regular exercise on the Downs, and to abstinence from any study that requires too much

exertion of the mind. I should have skated indeed in Holland from town to town, and a little voyage would have dissipated my bile, if I had any; but that scheme I must postpone till another winter, and have sent an excuse to my Dutch friend, who expected me.

As I came hither entirely for the purpose of recruiting my exhausted spirits, and strengthening my stomach, I have abstained with some reluctance from dancing, an amusement which I am as fond of as ever, but which would be too heating for a water-drinker; and as for the idler diversions of a public place, they have not the recommendation of novelty, without which they cannot long please. You, my dear friend, are in the mean time relaxing yourself, from the severer pursuits of science and civil knowledge, with the healthy and manly exercise of the field, from which you will return, with a keener appetite, to the noble feast which the Muses are again preparing for you at Cambridge. And here, by way of parenthesis, I must tell you that I joined a small party of hunters the other morning, and was in at the death of a hare; but I must confess, that I think hare-hunting a very dull exercise, and fit rather for a huntress than a mighty hunter, rather for Diana than Orion. Had I the taste and vigour of Actæon, without his indiscreet curiosity, my game would be the stag or the fox, and I should leave the hare in peace, without sending her to her many friends. This heresy of mine may arise from my fondness for every thing vast, and my disdain of every thing little; and for the same reason, I should prefer the more violent sport of the Asiatics, who enclose a whole district with toils, and then

attack the tigers and leopards with javelins, to the sound of trumpets and clarions. Of music, I conclude, you have as much at Althorpe as your heart can desire ; I might here have more than my ears could bear, or my mind conceive, for we have with us La Motte, Fischer, Rauzzini ; but, as I live in the house of my old master, Evans, whom you remember, I am satisfied with his harp, which I prefer to the Theban lyre, as much as I prefer Wales to ancient or modern Egypt.

I was this morning with Wilkes, who showed me a letter lately written to him from Paris, by Diderot : as I have, you know, a quick memory, I brought away the substance of it, and give it to you in a translation almost literal :—" Friend Wilkes, it delights me to hear that you still have sufficient employment for your active mind, without which you cannot long be happy. I have just read the several speeches which you have delivered on the subject of your present war against the provincials : they are full of eloquence, force, and dignity. I too have composed a speech on the same subject, which I would deliver in your senate, had I a seat in it. ' I will wave for the present, my countrymen, all consideration of the justice or injustice of the measures you are pursuing ; I well know that to be an improper topic at the time when the public welfare is immediately concerned : I will not even question, at present, your power to reduce an exasperated and desperate people ; but consider, I entreat you, that you are surrounded by nations by whom you are detested ; and say, for Heaven's sake, how long you will give them reason to laugh at the ridiculous figure you are making.' This is my harangue ;

it is short in words, but extensive in meaning."— So far, my dear lord, we have no reason to censure the thoughts or expressions of the learned Encyclopedist : what follows is so profligate, that I would not transcribe it, if I were not sure that you would join with me in condemning it. "As to yourself," he adds, "be cheerful ; drink the best wines ; keep the gayest company ; and should you be inclined to a tender passion, address yourself to such women as make the least resistance : they are as amusing and as interesting as others. One lives with them without anxiety, and quits them without regret." I want words, Diderot, to express the baseness, the folly, the brutality of this sentiment. I am no cynic, but as fond as any man at Paris of cheerful company, and of such pleasures as a man of virtue need not blush to enjoy ; but if the philosophy of the French academicians be comprised in your advice to your friend Wilkes, keep it to yourself, and to such as you. I am of a different sect. He concludes his letter with some professions of regard, and with a recommendation of a young Frenchman, who told Wilkes some speeches of Diderot to the empress of Russia, which you shall hear at some other time. I am interrupted, and must leave you with reluctance till the morning.

XLVIII.

From Mr. Burke.

MY DEAR SIR,

March 12, 1778.

I GIVE you many thanks for your most obliging and valuable present, and feel myself extremely honoured by this mark of your friendship. My first leisure will be employed in an attentive perusal of an author, who had merit enough to fill up a part of yours, and whom you have made accessible to me with an ease and advantage, which one so many years disused to Greek literature as I have been, could not otherwise have. Isæus is an author of whom I know nothing, but by fame; I am sure that any idea I had from thence conceived of him, will not be at all lessened by seeing him in your translation. I do not know how it has happened that orators have hitherto fared worse in the hands of the translators, than even the poets: I never could bear to read a translation of Cicero. Demosthenes suffers, I think, somewhat less; but he suffers greatly: so much, that I must say, that no English reader could well conceive from whence he had acquired the reputation of the first of orators.

I am satisfied that there is now an eminent exception to this rule; and I sincerely congratulate the public on that acquisition. I am, with the greatest truth and regard, my dear sir, your most faithful and obliged humble servant,

EDMUND BURKE.

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XLIX.

From Mr. Swinney.

SIR,

Pera of Constantinople, Jan. 1, 1778.

So high an opinion do I entertain of your humanity and politeness, as to persuade myself you will readily pardon the liberty I have taken, of sending you a Persian and Grecian manuscript. If, on perusal of one or the other book, you should meet with a single passage that may contribute either to your instruction or amusement, my purpose will be fully answered.

Among the real curiosities I have seen at Constantinople, is a public museum, erected at the sole expense of a most learned grand-vizir, whose name and title was Rajib Pacha. This collection contains about two thousand Arabian, Persian, and

Turkish manuscripts, which, the learned say, contain vast stores of erudition. It is not improbable but I may be able, on some favourable occasion, to procure you a copy of the catalogue; and then, should you be disposed to have any of the manuscripts copied, I entreat you will confer the honour upon me of executing the commission. People assure me (but I dare not say whether with good authority or no), that the entire Decades of Livy, and the complete History of Curtius, are contained in that very precious repository; if so, who knows but majesty itself (so superlatively happy are we in a monarch who favours the arts and sciences!) may graciously condescend to command a copy of them!

Be pleased to accept of my warmest wishes for your health, prosperity, and very long life; and believe me to be (what I sincerely am) a lasting admirer of your abilities, and, at the same time, dear sir, &c.

SIDNEY SWINNEY.

L.

From Dr. Stuart.

MY DEAR SIR,

October 3, 1778.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your most obliging letter. It is impossible for me to express the value in which I hold the favourable sentiments you have conveyed to me ; and above all, that strain of cordiality and friendship which accompany them. The loss of that long letter or dissertation, into which my performance was about to entice you, is a matter of infinite regret to me ; but I hope that the object which then engaged more particularly your attention, and which was so worthy of it, is now within your reach ; that the fates are to comply with your desires, and to place you in a scene where so much honour and so many laurels are to be won and gathered.

It affects me with a lively pleasure, that your taste has turned with a peculiar fondness to the studies of law and government on the great scale of history and manners. They have been too long in the management of inquirers, who were merely metaphysicians, or merely the retainers of courts :

their generous and liberal nature has been wounded and debased by the minuteness of an acute but useless philosophy, and by a mean and slavish appetite for practice and wealth. It is now fit that we should have lawyers who are orators, philosophers, and historians.

But while I entreat you to accept my best thanks for your excellent letter, and express my approbation of those studies of which you are enamoured, permit me, at the same time, to embrace the opportunity of making known to you the bearer of these lines. Dr. Gillies, of whom you may have heard as the translator of Lysias, has been long my warm friend; and I have to recommend him to you as the possessor of qualities which are still more to his honour than extensive learning and real genius. Men who leave their compatriots behind them in the pursuits of science and true ambition, are of the same family, and ought to be known to one another.

Do me the favour, my dear sir, to continue to afford me a place in your memory; and believe me, that I shall always hear of your prosperity, your reputation, and your studies, with a peculiar and entire satisfaction.

I am now, and ever, yours, &c.

GILB. STUART.

P. S. In January or February, I am to send into the world a new work, in which I treat of the

Public Law, and the Constitutional History of Scotland; and, wherever you are, I am to transmit you one of the first copies, by Mr. Murray, of Fleet-street.

LI.

*From Dean Tucker.**

DEAR SIR,

Gloucester, September 21, 1778.

WHEN you first honoured me with your acquaintance, perhaps you was not aware what a troublesome correspondence you was bringing yourself into. Be that as it may, I will now beg leave to avail myself of the permission which you kindly granted me of consulting you on some points. Several copies of my last tract have been in the university upwards of a fortnight; and it is probable that by this time some have vouchsafed to read it. What, therefore, I wish to know, is, whether, in the judgment of those who have given it a perusal, I have confuted Mr. Locke's system in such a manner, that they are convinced his must be *wrong*, whatever else may happen to be *right*. If this is not the case—that is, if I have not totally confuted

* Josiah Tucker, D.D. dean of Gloucester.

Mr. Locke ; I need proceed no farther—for mine can have no chance to be true, if his is still supposed to be the only true one ; and I shall very willingly give up the pursuit : but if I have demolished his scheme, I have so far cleared the way to make room for my own ; and, in that case, I have one or two points to consult you about. I am,

J. TUCKER.

LII.

To Lord Althorpe.

Temple, Oct. 13, 1778.

My dear lord, captain, and friend (of all which titles no man entertains a juster idea than yourself), how shall I express the delight which your letter from Warley camp has given me ? I cannot sufficiently regret, that I was so long deprived of that pleasure ; for, intending to be in London soon after the circuit, I had neglected to leave any directions here about my letters ; so that yours has lain almost a month upon my table, where I found it yesterday, on my return from the country. I ought indeed to have written first to you, because I was a rambler, you stationary ; and because the pen has been my

peculiar instrument, as the sword has been yours this summer : but the agitation of forensic business, and the sort of society in which I have been forced to live, afforded me few moments of leisure, except those in which nature calls for perfect repose ; and the spirits, exhausted with fatigue, require immediate reparation. I rejoice to see that you are a votary, as Archilochus says of himself, both of the Muses and of Mars ; nor do I believe that a letter, full of more manly sentiments, or written with more unaffected elegance, than yours, has often been sent from a camp. You know I have set my mind on your being a fine speaker in the next parliament, in the cause of true constitutional liberty ; and your letters convince me that I shall not be disappointed. To this great object, both for your own glory and your country's good, your present military station will contribute not a little ; for a soldier's life naturally inspires a certain spirit and confidence, without which the finest elocution will not have a full effect. Not to mention Pericles, Xenophon, Cæsar, and a hundred other eloquent soldiers among the ancients, I am persuaded that Pitt (whom, by the way, I am far from comparing to Pericles) acquired his forcible manner in the field where he carried the colours. This I mention, in addition to the advantages of your present situation, which you very justly point out : nor can I think your summer in any respect uselessly spent, since our constitution has a good defence in a well regulated militia, officered by men who love their country ; and a militia so regulated, may, in due time, be the means of thinning the formidable standing army, if not of extinguishing it. Captain * * * * is one of the

worthiest, as well as tallest men in the kingdom ; but he and his Socrates (Dr. Johnson) have such prejudices in politics, that one must be upon one's guard in their company, if one wishes to preserve their good opinion. By the way, the dean of Gloucester has printed a work, which he thinks a full confutation of Locke's Theory of Government ; and his second volume will contain a new theory of his own : of this, when we meet. The disappointment to which you allude, and concerning which you say so many friendly things to me, is not yet certain. My competitor is not yet nominated ; many doubt whether he will be ; I think he will not, unless the chancellor should press it strongly. It is still the opinion and wish of the bar, that I should be the man. I believe the minister hardly knows his own mind. I cannot legally be appointed till January, or next month at soonest, because I am not a barrister of five years' standing till that time : now, many believe that they keep the place open for me till I am qualified. I certainly wish to have it, because I wish to have twenty thousand pounds in my pocket before I am eight-and-thirty years old ; and then I might contribute, in some little degree, towards the service of my country in parliament, as well as at the bar, without selling my liberty to a patron, as too many of my profession are not ashamed of doing : and I might be a speaker in the house of commons in the full vigour and maturity of my age ; whereas, in the slow career of Westminster Hall, I should not, perhaps, even with the best success, acquire the same independent station, till the age at which Cicero was killed. But be assured, my dear lord, that if the minister be offended at the

style in which I have spoken, do speak, and will speak, of public affairs, and, on that account, should refuse to give me the judgeship, I shall not be at all mortified, having already a very decent competence, without a debt or a care of any kind. I will not break in upon you at Warley unexpectedly; but whenever you find it most convenient, let me know, and I will be with you in less than two hours.

LIII.

From Adam Prince Czartoryski.

SIR,

Warsaw, Nov. 26, 1778.

It is the fate of those who, like you, are an ornament to the literary world, to be known to those who are perfectly unknown to them: each is entitled to call to them for light; and this I hope will be a sufficient apology for my intruding upon you, and interrupting those studious hours which you consecrate with so much success to the instruction of your readers.

I was happy enough of late to hit upon your Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations, and your History of the Persian Language. I found that you had made up, in these two works, a quarrel of a very old standing between erudition and taste: you have

brought them to meet together in such a friendly manner, that one who had never read but your writings, would be apt to think they always went hand in hand.

I have been applying myself since a few years to the study of Eastern languages; though I cannot flatter myself with having made as yet any considerable progress in that branch of learning. Your most excellent Grammar of the Persian Language, which gave birth to Mr. Richardson's one of the Arabic, executed upon the same plan, are the agreeable guides which I follow in that difficult journey: to them I owe to be rescued out of the hands of Erpenius, Guadagnola, and the rest of those unmerciful gentlemen who never took the least trouble about clearing the road, or plucking out one single thorn from the many with which the paths of the study of Eastern languages are covered. Give me leave to be still more beholden to you: and as you learned men are the leading stars of the unlearned, I beg you will bestow a few moments of your leisure upon answering some questions which may perhaps appear very trifling in the eyes of a man of your extensive knowledge.

I have always been at a loss to form any conjecture upon the following subject; which is, by what chance so many words from other European languages, or at least used in our European languages, are got into the Persian; as, for instance, *jivân*, *pudder*, *mâder*,* the English, *bad*, the German, *dochter*, *der*, *bend*, together with a deal of our Sclavonian, especially in the arithmetical

* Youth, father, mother.

numbers, which, even in the manner of pronouncing them, are exactly the same, such as *pendsed*, *acheshed*,* &c. I should be greatly obliged to you, likewise, if by your means I could be informed, whether the Dictionary of Meninski, proposed to be reprinted at Oxford, is already come out; whether it contains a great many additions which are not to be found in the edition of 1680; lastly, whether Mr. Richardson has published the second volume, English and Arabic, of his Dictionary. As to our poor countryman, Meninski, he has not met with the reward which he had a right to expect: † after having wasted his health and fortune in the finishing of his work, he died unnoticed at Vienna; and his daughter ended her life in the same city a few years ago, very ill used by those who had advanced money to her father, for the publishing of his work. You live in a country where such a sin would be ranked among the mortal ones. Baron Reviczki, so justly and honourably mentioned in your works, has been residing here for several years, as minister of the court of Vienna: we have often made the wish that something could tempt you to

* 500 and 600.

† It appears that Meninski was no less distinguished for his extensive erudition and profound knowledge of languages, particularly Oriental, than by the propriety of conduct, and abilities displayed by him in various official situations to which he had risen by his merit. His first station was that of first interpreter to the Polish embassy at the Porte, and from this he was gradually advanced to the rank of a counsellor of war to the emperor at Vienna, and first interpreter of Oriental languages. He died at Vienna, at the age of 75, in 1698, eighteen years after the publication of his famous and useful work, the *Oriental Thesaurus*.

take our part of the world in your way. If that should ever happen, I would consider it as a most agreeable circumstance for me, if you could be prevailed upon to accept of my house during your stay, and consider it as your own. I know what advantages we might reap from so useful and agreeable an intercourse, and would make it our business not to let it lay heavy upon our hands. I must (before I end) express to you the sense of pleasure which I felt as a Pole, in reading that passage of your preface which concerns our country; it bears the stamp of humanity and spirit. Now, after having repeated my excuses for having been so forward, and perhaps so tedious,

I am, with all possible regard, &c.

ADAM PRINCE CZARTORYSKI,

General of Podolia.

LIV.

To Prince Adam Czartoryski.

Lamb's Buildings, Temple, London, Feb. 17, 1779.

NOTHING could be more honourable to me than your letter; nothing more flattering than the sentiments which you express in it: but I am so little used to converse or correspond with princes, and have so long been accustomed to the plainness of the ancients, that I should address your highness with more facility in Latin, than in any modern idiom. Yet, as you not only perfectly understand my native language, but even write it (I speak sincerely) with elegance, I will try to answer you in English, with Roman simplicity.

It gives me great pleasure, that my juvenile compositions have been at all useful or entertaining to you. What higher reward can a writer desire than the approbation of such a reader? In supposing, however, that you interrupt my studious hours, which I am consecrating to literature, allow me to say, that, unhappily for me, you are a little mistaken. My last four years have been spent in forensic labours, which, however arduous, are no less pleasing than reputable, and would be perfectly congenial with my temper and disposition, if they

did not wholly preclude me from resuming my former studies. It is possible, however, that I may soon succeed to a high judicial office in Bengal, where the vacations will give me leisure to renew my acquaintance, which I now am obliged to intermit, with the Persian and Arabic classics. Should my appointment take place, I shall set a high value on your correspondence, and will not fail to send both your highness, and my friend Baron Reviczki (to whom I will write very soon), some wreaths of flowers from the banks of the Ganges.

In answer to your questions, I must inform your highness, that the project of reprinting Meninski here is entirely dropped ; but Richardson is indefatigable, and advances as expeditiously as possible with the second part of his dictionary. How so many European words crept into the Persian language, I know not with certainty. Procopius, I think, mentions the great intercourse, both in war and peace, between the Persians and the nations in the north of Europe and Asia, whom the ancients knew by the general name of Scythians. Many learned investigators of antiquity are fully persuaded, that a very old and almost primæval language was in use among these northern nations, from which, not only the Celtic dialects, but even the Greek and Latin are derived ; in fact, we find *πατηρ* and *μητηρ* in Persian, nor is *θυλατηρ* so far removed from *dochter*, or even *νομα* and *nomen* from *nám*, as to make it ridiculous to suppose, that they sprung from the same root. We must confess, that these researches are very obscure and uncertain ; and you will allow, not so agreeable as an ode of Hafez, or an elegy of Amr'alkais. How

happy should I be, my dear prince, if, on my return from India, I could visit Poland, accept the kind invitation of your highness, and enjoy the promised pleasure of your conversation and friendship. My good genius forbids me wholly to despair of that happiness; and the *sperata voluptas suavis amicitiae*, which enabled Lucretius to endure any toil, and to spend the starry nights, as he says, in contemplation, shall have a similar effect on, &c.

WILLIAM JONES.

LV.

From Dr. Stuart.

MY DEAR SIR,

Feb. 1^o, 1779.

I BEG you to accept my new work,* as a mark of my best observance. The subjects are very important, very curious, and very new; but the materials upon which I was to operate were very imperfect. Indeed, I fear much, that a propriety of intention is all my merit, and from that, I think, I am to draw little glory; for it is common to me with writers who are the weakest and most trifling.

* Observations concerning the Public Law and Constitutional History of Scotland.

Yet, if your eye can trace any evidence in this trifle to oppose my apprehensions, I shall be very happy. All the humility of my doubts will go away. In two respects, I expose myself very much to censure. I have attacked the *nobile officium* of the court of session; and I have vindicated the freedom of the Scottish government from the misrepresentations of Dr. Robertson, the historiographer of Scotland. With a thousand people, these things are the greatest of all crimes. It is in England, and not in this country, that I am to find those readers who will be perfectly impartial.

I entreat you to accept my most sincere wishes for your prosperity, and that you will believe me, with the most entire respect,

My dear sir, &c.

GILB. STUART.

LVI.

From Dr. Stuart.

DR. STUART presents his best compliments to Mr. Jones.

I beg to have the pleasure to submit to your inspection a small treatise, which I have published a few years ago, as an introduction to an extensive work on the laws and constitution of England, which I have long meditated, and have in part executed. If you like my ideas, I shall account myself extremely fortunate : if they do not strike you as of importance and interesting, I shall think that I have employed my leisure without advantage. Your line of study has led you to inquire into the history of English manners and jurisprudence : the little work which accompanies this note, is perfectly within this line ; and, as I have the most entire confidence in your penetration and candour, I should be happy to know your opinion of it. I should then be in a state to form a resolution whether I ought to give order and method to the materials I have collected, in the view of prosecuting a subject, which I may, perhaps, have undertaken, without having properly consulted my forces. You will do me the favour to excuse this trouble.

LVII.

*From C. Reviczki. **

Warsaw, March 17, 1779:

I LATELY received through Mr. * * * * your last two learned publications; a most agreeable and convincing proof of your affectionate remembrance of me. The singular erudition with which your works abound, not only delighted me exceedingly, but almost excited my inclination to resume those studies which I had almost forgotten. Prince Adam Czartoryski, who has cultivated Oriental literature not unsuccessfully, had already afforded me an opportunity of perusing your life of Nadir Shah. He particularly pointed out the passages in the dissertation, in which you make such honourable mention of me, and for which I am indebted to your partiality alone. I regret the loss which the republic of letters must suffer from your desertion, and determination to devote yourself to the altar of Themis: but I trust that Melpomene, under whose auspices you were born, will compel you to return to your allegiance. I am heartily

* Written in Latin.

tired with a residence of seven years on the banks of the Vistula ; but the termination of the German war will, I hope, restore me to a more pleasing situation. How much more agreeable would it be to me, if fortune would allow me to gratify my inclinations, by passing my days in England, near you ! But to whatever place my destiny may lead me, my affection for you will continue unabated.

Farewell.

LVIII.

To Lord Althorpe.

Temple, Feb. 4, 1780.

THE public piety having given me this afternoon what I rarely can obtain—a short intermission of business—can I employ my leisure more agreeably than in writing to my friend ? I shall send my letter at random, not knowing whether you are at Althorpe or at Buckingham ; but persuading myself that it will find you without much delay. May I congratulate you and our country on your entrance upon the great career of public life ? If there ever was a time when men of spirit, sense, and virtue, ought to stand forth, it is the present. I am informed, that you have attended some country meet-

ings, and are on some committees. Did you find it necessary or convenient to speak on the state of the nation? It is a noble subject; and with your knowledge, as well as judgment, you will easily acquire habits of eloquence: but *habits* they are, no less than playing on a musical instrument, or handling a pencil: and as the best musicians and finest painters began with playing sometimes out of time, and drawing out of proportion; so the greatest orators must begin with leaving some periods unfinished, and perhaps with sitting down in the middle of a sentence. It is only by continued use that a speaker learns to express his ideas with precision and soundness, and to provide, at the beginning of a period, for the conclusion of it; but to this facility of speaking, the habit of writing rapidly contributes in a wonderful degree. I would particularly impress this truth upon your mind, my dear friend, because I am fully convinced that an Englishman's real importance in his country will always be in a compound ratio of his virtue, his knowledge, and his eloquence; without all of which qualities, little real utility can result from either of them apart: and I am no less persuaded, that a virtuous and knowing man, who has no natural impediment, may by habit acquire perfect eloquence, as certainly as a healthy man, who has the use of his muscles, may learn to swim or to skate. When shall we meet, and where, that we may talk over these and other matters? There are some topics which will be more properly discussed in conversation than upon paper, I mean on account of their copiousness; for believe me, I should not be concerned, if all that I write were copied at the

post-office, and read before the king in council.

* * * * * At the same time, I solemnly declare, that I will not enlist under the banners of a party—a declaration which is, I believe, useless; because no party would receive a man, determined, as I am, to think for himself. To you alone, my friend, and to your interests, I am firmly attached, both from early habit and from mature reason; from ancient affection, unchanged for a single moment; and from a full conviction that such affection was well placed. The views and wishes of all other men, I will analyse and weigh with that suspicion and slowness of belief, which my experience, such as it is, has taught me; and to be more particular, although I will be jealous of the regal part of our constitution, and always lend an arm towards restraining its proud waves within due limits; yet my most vigilant and strenuous efforts shall be directed against any oligarchy that may rise; being convinced, that on the popular part of every government depends its real force, the obligation of its laws, its welfare, its security, its permanence. I have been led insensibly to write more seriously than I had intended: my letters shall not always be so dull; but with so many public causes of grief or of resentment, who can at all times be gay?

* * * * *

LIX.

From the Rev. Edmund Cartwright.

SIR,

May 8, 1780.

It is with pleasure I observe the public papers mention you as one of the candidates to represent the university of Oxford at the ensuing election. As a literary society, the rank you hold in the republic of letters ought certainly to point you out as one of the first objects of her choice.

But it is not merely upon this principle that I feel myself interested in your success : exclusive of that veneration with which I look up to superior talents, I have an additional motive (which, indeed, ought to supersede every other) in the very high opinion I have formed of your intègrity. If in this opinion I should be mistaken, your own writings have greatly contributed to mislead me. You will perceive, sir, my reason for troubling you with this letter is to desire that, when you make out a list of your friends upon this occasion, my name may be admitted into the number. I am, sir, with truth, your very sincere well-wisher, &c.

EDMUND CARTWRIGHT.

LX.

To the Rev. E. Cartwright.

DEAR SIR, Lamb's Buildings, Temple, May 16, 1780.

SINCE my friends have declared me a candidate for the very honourable seat which sir Roger Newdigate intends to vacate, I have received many flattering testimonies of regard from several respectable persons : but your letter, dated the 8th of May, which I did not receive till this morning, is, without a compliment, the fairest and most pleasing fruit of the competition in which I am engaged. The rule of the university, which is a very noble one, forbidding me to solicit votes for myself, I have not been at liberty even to apply to many persons whom it is both a pleasure and honour to know. Your unsolicited approbation is a great reward of my past toil in my literary career, and no small incentive to future exertions. As to my integrity, of which you are pleased to express a good opinion, it has not yet been tried by any very strong temptations : I hope it will resist them if any be thrown in my way. This only I may say (and I think without a boast), that my ambition was always very much bounded, and that my views are already attained by professional success adequate to my highest expectations.

Perhaps, I shall not be thought very unambitious, if I add, that my great object of imitation is Mr. Selden, and that, if I could obtain the same honour which was conferred on him, I should, like him, devote the rest of my life to the service of my constituents and my country; to the practice of an useful profession, and to the unremitted study of our English laws, history, and literature. To be approved by you, and such men as you (if many such could be found), would be a sufficient reward to, &c.

W. JONES.

Permit me to add an ode, printed (but not published) before the present competition, and at a time when I should have been certainly made a judge in India, by the kindness of Lord North, if any appointment had taken place. It proves sufficiently that no views or connexions can prevent me from declaring my honest sentiments, when I think they may be useful to my country.

LXI.

From Mr. Burrows.

SIR,

Hadley, near Barnet, May 23, 1780.

FOR the first time I am sorry I did not take all my degrees. I should have been happy to have given the testimony of an individual to a merit, which I have long considered as the reproach, as well as ornament, of this age and country. I must add, it would have given me particular pleasure to have expressed my gratitude to one who has so much contributed to my instruction and amusement.

● ● ● ● ● ●

I most heartily wish you success, as the republic seems in great danger of taking some harm from the weakness of her friends and the vigour of her foes; and never, in any time of her life, stood in more need of the attracting and repelling powers of men of ability. I must own too, I have an additional reason for wishing you seated in the British parliament; as I shall take great satisfaction in seeing the dull of all denominations convinced, that men of wit and learning are as capable of excelling in public business, as they call it, as the most illiterate of them all.

I am, &c.

J. BURROWS.

LXII.

To Dr. Milman.

SIR,

May 30, 1780.

ALTHOUGH I have not yet the honour, to which I have long aspired, of your acquaintance and friendship, yet I am persuaded that the bond which ought, in this crisis, to unite all honest men, is, *idem sentire de republicâ*; and my friend, Mr. Milles, having imparted to me the contents of your yesterday's note, I beg leave to assure you, that I never imagined it possible, in this metropolis, at the busiest time 'of the year, for professional men to attend a committee of canvassers, and never thought of soliciting the attendance or exertions of my friends; any farther than might be consistent with their engagements and avocations. Accept, sir, my very warm and very sincere thanks (and when I have the honour of being known to you, you will find that my warmth and my sincerity are perfectly undissembled) for the sentiments which you express to Mr. Milles in regard to me. Whatever be the event of the competition in which I am engaged, I shall certainly reap the most pleasing fruit from the kindness of many excellent persons, by whom it is a high honour to be esteemed.

• • • • •

This only I can say ; that, my friends having nominated me, I have nothing to do but to steer right onward, as Milton says, to a poll. The voyage will probably last a twelvemonth at least ; and though I began to sail after the Monsoon, yet I am by no means in despair of reaching the port with flying pennons, how unfavourably soever some few breezes may blow. Without an allegory ; it will necessarily take up much time for my friends to canvass nine hundred voters, a great majority of whom is dispersed in various parts of the kingdom. As to my competitors, I know them both, and respect the benevolence of Sir W. Dolben as much as I admire the extensive erudition and fine taste of Dr. Scott : but their political principles are the reverse of mine.

LXIII.

*From H. A. Schultens.**

Leyden, June 3, 1780.

ALTHOUGH increasing, and, at this particular time, incessant occupation, reluctantly compels me, in some measure, to forego the pleasure of corresponding with my friends, yet the subject of your last

* Written in Latin.

letter appears to me so important, that I am determined to hazard an immediate answer to it in three words, rather than, by waiting for a more favourable opportunity, run the risk of exciting a suspicion of any want of regard and affection for you, by an apparent inattention to your interest. I should be as happy to promote it as my own, although I am unfortunately deficient in the means of doing it.

The situation for which you are canvassing, my friend, is most honourable and important ; and if it be attainable by merit, not favour, I know no person more worthy of it than yourself ; none who has higher pretensions to genius ; none who possesses a greater extent of useful knowledge, nor a more powerful and commanding eloquence ; none who exceeds you in love for liberty and your country ; none more capable of applying a remedy to the disastrous situation of affairs, by wise counsels, prudence, fortitude, and integrity : none, therefore, to whose care our *alma mater* (allow me to evince my affection to the University by this expression) can more safely trust her interests and prosperity.

Have you, however, no apprehension that your enthusiasm for liberty, which is so generally known, may, in these unpropitious times, injure the success of your cause ? Will those, upon whose votes your election depends, allow the University to be represented in parliament by Julius Melesigonus ? My countrymen have adopted an opinion, that in the present situation of affairs, no man, who publicly avows his attachment to liberty, can be employed in the administration.

This, you will say, is no concern of mine : be that as it may, no exertions, on my part, shall be wanting

to promote your success; and I wish you would inform me how they can be directed to your advantage. Have I the power of sending a vote in your favour? I much doubt it. Shall I apply to any of my friends at Oxford who are well disposed towards me; for instance, Messrs. Kennicot, White, and Winstanley? Write to me without delay, and inform me what I shall do, that I may convince you of my zeal and sincerity to serve you.

I am at present at Leyden, having succeeded my father, who died about six months ago, in the professorship of Oriental literature: I have much to say upon this subject, and hope shortly to write fully to you about it. I long to know how you are, as well as that best of women, your mother, and your sister, to whose friendship I am so much obliged. Present my affectionate regards to them. Farewell, and remember me.

Some catalogues of my father's library, which is to be sold in September, have been forwarded, I think, to Elmsley, and I have ordered one to be sent to you.

LXIV.

To Dr. Wheeler.

MY DEAR SIR,

September 8, 1780.

THE parliament being suddenly dissolved, I must beg you, as one of my best and truest friends, to make it known in the University, that I decline giving the learned body any farther trouble, and am heartily sorry for that which has already been given them. It is needless to add, what you well know, that I should never have been the first to have troubled them at all: I always thought a delegation to parliament from so respectable a society a laudable object of true ambition; but I considered it as a distant object, as the reward of long labour and meritorious service in our country; and I conceived, that, had I filled a judge's seat in India, with the approbation of my countrymen, I might, on my return, be fixed on as a proper representative of the University. Had not that happened which you know, I should no more have thought of standing now, than of asking for a peerage. As to principles in politics, if my success at Oxford, at any future time, depend upon a change of them, my cause is hopeless: I cannot alter or conceal them without abandoning either my reason or my integrity; the first

of which is my only guide, and the second my chief comfort in this passage through life. Were I inclined to boast of any thing, I should certainly boast of making those principles my rule of conduct, which I learned from the best of men in ancient and modern times ; and which, my reason tells me, are conducive to the happiness of mankind. As to men, I am certainly not hostile to the ministers, from whom I have received obligations ; but I cannot in conscience approve their measures.

LXV.

To the Rev. Edmund Cartwright.

MY DEAR SIR,

September 4, 1780.

PERMIT me again to express (what I can never express too often, or too warmly) my very sincere thanks for your kind letter, dated May 8, and to assure you, as I may with the greatest truth, that I am just as much obliged to you as if your kindness had been attended with the most brilliant success ; but as my strength in the great elective body of our University (which strength, all circumstances considered, was very respectable) lay chiefly among the non-resident voters, it would be unpardonably ungrateful in me were I to give my friends the trouble of taking long journeys, without a higher

probability of success than my late inquiries have left me room to expect : I therefore decline giving any farther trouble to the learned body, and am heartily sorry for that which has already been given them, though not originally by me or my friends. I am perfectly conscious that had I been so fortunate as to succeed at Oxford, I should not have advanced, nor wished to advance, a single step in the career of ambition, but should cheerfully have sacrificed my repose and peace of mind to such a course as I conceived likely to promote the public good ; and this consciousness cannot but prevent me from being in the least depressed by my failure of success. I should never repent of this little struggle, if it had produced no other fruit than the testimony of your approbation. The hurry of the general election to a professional man, has obliged me to suspend, till another long vacation, two little works, which I hoped to finish in the remainder of this. The first is a treatise on the Maritime Jurisprudence of the Athenians, illustrated by five speeches of Demosthenes, in commercial causes ; and the second, a dissertation on the Manners of the Arabians before the time of Mahomet, illustrated by the seven poems, which were written in letters of gold, and suspended in the temple at Mecca, about the beginning of the sixth century. When they are printed, I shall be proud in submitting them to your judgment, as their excellence is well known.

LXVI.

To Lord Althorpe.

Sept. 4, 1780.

THE intelligence which you so kindly sent me, my dear lord, and which was perfectly unexpected, has suspended, for a short time, my excursion to Passy ; for though I have not received any positive retainers for election business, yet there will be some contests in Wales, where I may possibly be employed ; and, though the whole system of election-laws, and of elections themselves (I always except the Grenville judicature), is quite repugnant to my ideas of the constitution, yet it would be thought unprofessional to be absent from England at such a time ; nor ought indeed any Englishman to be absent, when the question to be decided is, " Whether his country shall be free in form only, or in substance." I have therefore postponed my expedition for a fortnight at least, in which time all the borough elections will, I suppose, be over ; and by that time I shall be able to form a tolerable judgment of the counties. In the several counties through which I lately passed, I received (what I did not ask or desire) much praise from many

worthy men for my plan to prevent the necessity of making a standing army perpetual; but the uniform objection which I heard was, "the plan is legal and constitutional, but this is not the time for it." Lord Mansfield himself thought otherwise, when he said, in the house of lords, that no time was to be lost in giving strength to the civil power: but let the objectors beware, lest by refusing to adopt such a plan while they are able, because they think the time improper, they should not, when the proper time shall come, be allowed to adopt it. We had some entertaining causes on the circuit, particularly a singular indictment for alarming a village on the coast of Pembrokeshire, with a report that a hostile ship of war was approaching. The prosecutors were two magistrates (one of whom was an Indian —) who were angry at having been made fools of; a point, however, which they could not easily have proved, inasmuch as they were fools already made. I defended the prosecuted man with success, and mingled in my speech many bitter reflections on the state of this country at the time of the alarm, and on the attempt (because the English laws were not relished in India) to import the Indian laws into England, by imprisoning and indicting an honest man, who had done no more than his duty, and whose only fault was fear, of which both his prosecutors were equally guilty. On my return through Oxford, I was convinced, by undoubted authority, that although I had been continually gaining ground, and had collected no fewer than ten or twelve votes on the circuit, yet I had no chance of success against Sir W. D., and any attempt to shake

Mr. Page would have been not only consummate rashness, but even inconsistent with my repeated declarations.

Let me request you to give my very sincere thanks to Dr. Preedy for his kind promise and assistance, assuring him (which is very true) that I am just as much obliged to him, as if his kindness had been attended with success, and desiring him to thank his friend Dr. Ruding in the same terms, and with the same sincerity. Must I add this trouble to that which you have already taken? I will make no apologies, after a friendship of fifteen years, uninterrupted even for a single moment. How shall I conclude? by wishing you prosperity in the Greek, or health in the Roman form? No man, my dear lord, wishes you both more ardently than I do.

Farewell.

LXVII.

To Dr. Wetherel.

SIR,

Sept. 6, 1780.

IT having been suggested to me by a most respectable friend, that it would be proper, and was in fact the due form, to apprise you and the vice-chancellor, as soon as possible, of my being no longer a candidate for the University, I sent to the houses of those gentlemen who honoured me with forming my committee, thinking it more regular that they should make the declaration of my having declined a poll; but as they are out of town, I am necessitated to trouble you with this letter. If Dr. Scott should stand the poll, I am ready to perform my promise of giving him my vote, as I am no more his competitor. Since I have taken up my pen (which it was by no means my intention to do), I cannot help saying that the conduct of some of my friends in respect of me gives me surprise, and (for their sakes rather than my own) uneasiness. If I have not been able to prove my attachment to my fellow-collegiates, it is because they never called for my service: if they had, they should have found that no man would have exerted himself

with more activity to serve them ; nor was I deficient in zeal, I well remember, when you, in particular, required my exertions. I am conscious of having deserved very well of the college ; and if any of its members are so unkind as to think otherwise, I will show my sense of their unkindness, by persisting, till my last hour, in deserving well of them. After this, I should little have expected that my letters, couched in the most sincere and affectionate terms, and absolutely unexceptionable if they had been fairly represented, would have been repeated by detached sentences (which might have made no small alteration in the sense) in several companies in the University ; still less should I have expected to find myself charged with misrepresenting (a serious word !) facts, of which I would, if necessary, make a deposition ; and with writing, what it must have appeared, from strong internal evidence, that I could not have written ; because it contained a mistake as to the number of our lay-fellows, which I (who know and esteem Mr. Ray) could never have made. Least of all could I have expected to be accused of wishing to overturn a constitution, which I prize because I understand it, and which I would sacrifice my life to preserve : all these charges God and my conscience enable me to bear with the coolest indifference, and with little abatement of that respect with which I ever have been, &c.

LXVIII.

To the Rev. Edmund Cartwright.

DEAR SIR,

September 8, 1780.

YOUR last favour I have this instant received, and am obliged to answer it in the greatest haste. I hope you have, by this time, received my letter, in which I informed you that I had declined a poll at Oxford, but was as much obliged to you and my other friends as if your kindness had been attended with the most brilliant success. I saw an advertisement in the paper, that Dr. Scott had declined.

* * * * *

I have been told, that the very ode to which you are so indulgent, lost me near twenty votes: this, however, I am unwilling to believe. I am, &c.

WILLIAM JONES.

SOME OBSERVATIONS RESPECTING THE SLAVE
TRADE.*

" I PASS with haste by the coast of Africa, whence my mind turns with indignation at the abominable traffic in the human species, from which a part of our countrymen dare to derive their most inauspicious wealth. Sugar, it has been said, would be dear, if it were not worked by *Blacks* in the Western islands; as if the most laborious, the most dangerous works, were not carried on in every country, but chiefly in England, by *free* men: in fact, they are so carried on with infinitely more advantage; for there is an alacrity in a consciousness of freedom, and a gloomy sullen indolence in a consciousness of slavery: but let sugar be as dear as it may; it is better to eat none, to eat honey, if sweetness only be palatable; better to eat aloes or coloquintida, than violate a primary law of nature, impressed on every heart not imbruted by avarice; than rob one human creature of those eternal rights, of which no law upon earth can justly deprive him."

* These have been extracted from a discourse drawn up by Mr. Jones, and containing the purport of a speech intended to have been made at a meeting of the freeholders of Middlesex, on the 9th of September, 1780.

LXIX.

To Lord Althorpe.

(No date.)

I THOUGHT myself peculiarly unfortunate last Friday, in my way to London : at Chatham, where I had the pleasure indeed of seeing lady Rothes restored to perfect health, I sought in vain for Mr. Langton among the new ravelines and counterscarps ; and at Dartford I had the mortification to find, that you, my dear lord, were not in camp, where I was not without hope of passing an evening, which, I am persuaded, would have been equally agreeable to us both. After a very tedious and uncomfortable passage, I arrived at Margate on Wednesday night, having been out of England a month exactly, half of which time I spent at Paris. In this interval, I have seen, not indeed so many men or so many cities as the hero of the Odyssey, but a sufficient number of both to have enlarged very considerably the sphere of my knowledge. I have heard much and thought more ; but the result of all I have heard and thought is, that the war, which I have invariably and deliberately condemned, as no less unjust than impolitic, will continue very long to desolate the country of our brethren, and exhaust our own. The principal object of my late excursion

has been completely answered; and I had more success than I at first expected, in one or two subordinate pursuits, professional and literary. I attended some causes at the *palais*, and have brought with me the works of a most learned lawyer, whose name and merit I shall have the honour of making known to our countrymen. I obtained access also to a fine manuscript in the royal library, which has given me a more perfect acquaintance with the manners of the ancient Arabians; and how little soever I may value mere *philology*, considered apart from the knowledge to which it leads, yet I shall ever set a high price on those branches of learning, which make us acquainted with the human species in all its varieties. Paris itself, and all the roads to it, are so perfectly known to you, that an account of my journey would be superfluous; and as to politics, I would rather converse than write on a subject so very serious; not that I have any apprehensions, as you well know, of the least danger, or even inconvenience to myself; but many accidents happen to letters, and in times like these the post is hardly to be trusted. This, however, I will say; that, as it is my fixed design, if I live to see a peace, to write an impartial history of the war; I was desirous, in France, to be acquainted with as many of the American leaders as I could meet with; and the same desire would have carried me to Amsterdam, if the season had not been so far advanced. All the intelligence that I collected, and all the observations that I made, you should have heard on Friday evening, had you been in camp, and shall hear in the course of conversation when we meet. I rejoice to hear, since my return, that lord Spencer

is much better. Farewell, my dear lord: you are more fully assured, than formal words can express, how sincerely I am, &c.

LXX.

To the Rev. Edmund Cartwright.

DEAR SIR,

November 12, 1780.

You have so fully proved the favourable opinion which you do me the honour to entertain of me, that I am persuaded you acquit me of any culpable neglect, in delaying, for more than two months, to answer your very obliging letter. The truth is, that I had but just received it when I found myself obliged to leave England on very pressing business; and I have not long been returned from Paris. The hurry of preparing myself for so long a journey, at such a season, left me no time for giving you my hearty thanks, which I now most sincerely request you to accept, both for your kind letter, and for the very elegant sonnet, with which you have rewarded me abundantly for my humble labours in the field of literature. I give you my word, that your letters and verses have greatly encouraged me in proceeding, as expeditiously as I am able, to send abroad my *Seven Arabian Poets*; and I propose to spend next month at Cambridge, in order to finish my little work, and to make use of a rare manuscript, in the library of Trinity College: my own manuscript,

which was copied for me at Aleppo, is very beautiful, but, unfortunately, not very correct. You may depend on receiving a copy as soon as it can be printed.

How happy I shall be if I should be able to wait upon you in Leicestershire, or to see you in London, and assure you in person, that I am, with the greatest sincerity, &c.

W. JONES.*

* About the period at which this letter was written, the following private memorandum was made by Mr. Jones, respecting his future studies and pursuits.

Anno Ætat. 33.

Resolved to learn no more *rudiments* of any kind, but to *perfect* myself in,

First, twelve languages, as the means of acquiring accurate knowledge of the

I.—HISTORY.

of

1. Man.
2. Nature.

II.—ARTS.

1. Rhetoric.
2. Poetry.
3. Painting.
4. Music.

III.—SCIENCES.

1. Law.
2. Mathematics.
3. Dialectic.

N. B.—Every species of *human* knowledge may be reduced to one or other of these divisions: even *law* belongs partly to the history of man, partly, as a science, to dialectic.

The twelve languages are,

Greek,
Latin,
Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese,
Hebrew, Arabic,
Persian,
Turkish,
German, English.

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**THE
LETTERS
OF
SIR WILLIAM JONES.
VOL. II.**



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1821.**



SIR WILLIAM JONES'S LETTERS.

LXXI.

To the Bishop of St. Asaph.

MY LORD,

November 23, 1780.

HAD I not been prevented by particular business from writing to your lordship on Tuesday evening and yesterday, I would have informed you before, that we had done ourselves the honour (and a very great one we shall ever esteem it) of electing your lordship a member of our club : * the election,

* Generally known by the name of the "Turk's Head Club," held in Gerrard-street, Soho. The establishment of this club was first proposed by sir Joshua Reynolds to Burke and Johnson, and the original members of it were the friends of these three : the number of members was gradually increased to forty—comprehending men of the most distinguished characters, and eminent for their learning, talents, and abilities.

of course, was unanimous; and it was carried with the sincere approbation and eagerness of all present. I am sorry to add, that lord Camden and the bishop of Chester were rejected. When bishops and chancellors honour us by offering to dine with us at a tavern, it seems very extraordinary that we should ever reject such an offer; but there is no reasoning on the caprice of men. Of our club I will only say, that there is no branch of human knowledge, on which some of our members are not capable of giving information; and, I trust, that as the honour will be ours, so your lordship will receive some pleasure from the company, once a fortnight, of some of our first writers and critics, as well as our most virtuous senators and accomplished men. I think myself highly honoured in having been a member of this society near ten years, and chiefly in having contributed to add such names to the number of our friends as those of your lordship and lord Althorpe. I spoke yesterday in Westminster Hall for two hours and a half, on a knotty point of law; and this morning, for above an hour, on a very interesting public question: to-morrow I must argue a great cause, and am, therefore, obliged to conclude, with assuring your lordship, that I am, with the highest, &c.

W. JONES.

LXXII.

From the Bishop of St. Asaph.

DEAR SIR,

November 27.

You was prevented by sir Joshua Reynolds in your kind intentions of giving me the earliest notice of the honour you have done me. I believe Mr. Fox will allow me to say, that the honour of being elected into the Turk's Head Club is not inferior to that of being the representative of Westminster or Surrey: the electors are certainly more disinterested; and I should say they were much better judges of merit, if they had not rejected lord Camden, and chosen me. I flatter myself with the hopes of great pleasure and improvement in such a society as you describe, which, indeed, is the only club of which I ever wished myself a member.

Though I am much flattered with hearing from you, I was delighted with the cause of your delaying to write. Your talents have found means, by their own weight, to open the way to public notice and employment, which could not long be shut against them. Your pleadings for the *nephew* against the *daughter* promise something very curious in the particulars of the case, which seems to call for great abilities to defend it.

I would not neglect the first opportunity of an-

Answering your very obliging letter, though, it being early post day, I am forced to write in a greater hurry than I could wish. I am, &c.

J. ST. A.

• • • • •

LXXIII.

To the Rev. Edmund Cartwright.

DEAR SIR,

May 1, 1781.

I TAKE the liberty to send you (as my Arabian Poets are not yet ready to wait upon you) a paraphrase of a Greek fragment, which came into my head this spring in my way to Wales. I make no doubt of your continuing to cultivate the Muses, by whom you are so highly favoured, and hope you will from time to time transmit the fruit of their favours to, &c.

WILLIAM JONES.

LXXIV.

From the Bishop of St. Asaph.

DEAR SIR,

May 28, 1781.

You have my best and earliest thanks for your ode in the true Grecian taste and spirit. I remember to have seen a fragment of Alcæus, but I cannot find it in Aristides, of whom I have only Cantern's small edition: the seed you have found there, you have quickened, by the warmth of true genius, into a noble production. I cannot help observing, that Alcæus, like other good poets and patriots, was condemned for life to be in the minority.

I am, &c.

J. ST. ASAPH.

I hope you will not forget, that when you have leisure, your friends at Twyford will be very happy to see you.

LXXV.

From Mr. Burke.

I do not know how I can justify myself in the liberty I take with you; but, confiding in your humanity and condescension, I beg, if you have leisure for it, that you would be so kind as to breakfast with me, and assist me with your opinion and advice on the conduct of the Bengal Bill. The natives of the East, to whose literature you have done so much justice, are particularly under your protection for their rights. I have the honour to be, with the highest esteem and regard, dear sir, your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

EDMUND BURKE.

LXXVI.

To Mr. Gibbon.

DEAR SIR,

Lamb's Buildings, June 30, 1781.

I HAVE more than once sought, without having been so fortunate as to obtain, a proper opportunity of thanking you very sincerely for the elegant compliment which you pay me, in a work abounding in elegance of all kinds.

My Seven Arabian Poets will see the light before next winter, and be proud to wait upon you in their English dress : their wild productions will, I flatter myself, be thought interesting, and not venerable merely on account of their antiquity.*

In the mean while, let me request you to honour me with accepting a copy of a law tract, which is not yet published : the subject is so generally important, that I make no apology for sending you a professional work.

You must pardon my inveterate hatred of C. Octavianus, basely surnamed Augustus. I feel myself unable to forgive the death of Cicero, which, if he

* After an interval of about six years, we find Mr. Jones retracing his favourite haunts with the Arabian Muses. He had devoted his leisure hours of the winter of 1780 to complete a translation of seven ancient poems of the highest repute in Arabia.

did not promote, he might have prevented. Besides, even Mæcenas knew the cruelty of his disposition, and ventured to reproach him with it. In short, I have not Christian charity for him.

With regard to Asiatic letters, a necessary attention to my profession will compel me wholly and eternally to abandon them, unless lord North (to whom I am already under no small obligation), should think me worthy to concur in the improved administration of justice in Bengal, and should appoint me to supply the vacancy on the India bench. Were that appointment to take place this year, I should probably travel, for speed, through part of Egypt and Arabia, and should be able, in my way, to procure many Eastern tracts of literature and jurisprudence: I might become a good Mohammedan lawyer before I reached Calcutta; and, in my vacations, should find leisure to explain, in my native language, whatever the Arabs, Persians, and Turks, have written on science, history, and the fine arts.

My happiness by no means depends on obtaining this appointment, as I am in easy circumstances without my profession, and have flattering prospects in it; but if the present summer and the ensuing autumn elapse without my receiving any answer, favourable or unfavourable, I shall be forced to consider that silence as a polite refusal; and, having given sincere thanks for past favours, shall entirely drop all thoughts of Asia, and, "deep as ever plummet sounded, shall drown my Persian books." If my politics have given offence, it would be manly in ministers to tell me so. I shall never be personally hostile to them, nor enlist

under party banners of any colour; but I will never resign my opinions for interest, though I would cheerfully abandon them on conviction. My reason, such as it is, can only be controlled by better reason, to which I am ever open. As to my freedom of thought, speech, and action, I shall ever say, what Charles XII. wrote under the map of Riga: "Dieu me l'a donné; le diable ne me l'ôtera pas." But the fair answer to this objection is, that my system is purely speculative, and has no relation to my seat on the bench in India, where I should hardly think of instructing the Gentoos in the maxims of the Athenians. I believe, I should not have troubled you with this letter, if I did not fear that your attendance in parliament might deprive me of the pleasure of meeting you at the club next Tuesday; and I shall go to Oxford a few days after. At all times, and in all places, I shall ever be, with undissembled regard, dear sir,

Your much obliged and faithful servant,

W. JONES.

LXXVII.

*To H. A. Schultens.**

June, 1781.

You are not ignorant of my sentiments on this most abominable war: the enclosed imitation of an ode of Alcæus will clearly prove my detestation of tyranny—my zeal and exertions in the cause of liberty. Literature, which is, and ought to be, ever connected with humanity, will never, I trust, be degraded by a fratricidal war between the learned, particularly those who pursue the same studies. Do you, therefore, though a native of Holland, preserve that affection for me, which I, an Englishman, have, and shall ever retain for you.

I have translated into English, without the omission of a single line, the seven *suspended* poems of our Arabs, and mean to publish the whole with notes, and a dissertation on the ancient monuments of Arabia, in the next summer vacation.

I possess the Commentary of Tabrizi; and I have been obligingly furnished from Trinity College, Cambridge, with the Paraphrase of Zouzini, and his short and excellent notes. At Oxford, we

* Written in Latin.

have the notes and Persic version of Sadi, the Scholia of Ansari, and the fine edition of Obeidella; but I am anxious to inspect all editions and commentaries. Your illustrious grandfather, for whose memory, as in duty bound, I preserve the greatest respect, pronounces these poems worthy of immortality; and says, if I do not mistake, that he transcribed the manuscript of Nahasi, at Leyden, for his own use. I also observed in the copious catalogue of the Schultensian library (one copy of which I delivered to my friend Hunter), these words: "6990. The seven Moallakat Arabic, most beautifully written." Has this been purchased by any one? at what price will it be disposed of? I lament that I did not buy it; but being tied up at that time myself, by various important occupations, I could not bestow a thought on the suspended poems.

Assist me, I beseech you, in the name of the Muses, with materials for perfecting my work; collect from your stores any notes, or various readings which you may possess, and communicate them to me. I have mentioned, in my preliminary discourse, your Philarabic family,* and have more to say about it both true and honourable. I wish particularly to know, whether any of the seven poems, excepting those of Amr'alkeis and Tarafa, will be published in Holland. You shall receive

* Albert Schultens, the grandfather, and J. J. Schultens, the father of the person to whom this letter is addressed, were both distinguished for their knowledge of Oriental, particularly Arabic, literature.

my book, which will be elegantly bound by Baumgarten.

My mother, whom I most tenderly loved, was ever, in my opinion, the best of women ; I trust she is now the happiest : but my affliction for her loss is inconsolable. I shall be most happy to hear that you and your wife are well, and the early gratification of my wishes will be an additional pleasure.

LXXVIII.

From the Bishop of St. Asaph.

DEAR SIR,

Nov. 3, 1781.

A LETTER from you is always welcome, come sooner or later ; yet, I cannot help rejoicing at that ceaseless hurry of business, which occasioned your delay in writing, and made me lose a very valuable visit. Riches and reputation, after showing a little coyness at first, are now making their advances at a very great rate, and will soon be as lavish of their charms as you could wish ; yet I know you think too liberally, to let either your friends or your liberty suffer by engrossing you too much.

I thank you for the nuptial ode, which, notwithstanding its incorrectness, which you need not complain of, is the most genuine imitation of Pin-

dar I have ever seen. I don't know whether I can assent to your criticism on the word *replete*, that it is never used in a good sense. Were it left to me, I would use it in no sense. It has but little meaning. It was never naturalised in conversation or in prose; and, I think, makes no figure in verse.

I have another present of value to thank you for—your Essay on the Law of Bailments. To own the truth, your name to the advertisement made me impatient; and I had sent for it, and read it before. It appears to me to be clear, just, and accurate—I mean as clear as the subject will permit. My want of law language, and perhaps of legal understanding, made me feel great difficulty in following you through your very ingenious distinctions and consequences, of which I thought I could perceive the solidity. I foretell that this will be your last work. For the future, your business and the public will allow you to write no more.

Though I fear it will not be consistent with your employment in Westminster Hall, I cannot help telling you, that, for as many days as you can spare between this time and the meeting of parliament, you will find a warm bed, and a hearty welcome at Chilbolton. Mrs. Shipley and her daughters desire their compliments, and join in the invitation.

I am, &c.

J. ST. ASAPH.

LXXIX.

To the Rev. Edmund Cartwright.

DEAR SIR,

Dec. 20, 1791.

SINCE I received your obliging letter, an interval of six months has elapsed ; but in all that interval, I have either been deeply engaged in professional labours, or confined by illness : I have enjoyed no rest. At this moment I am slowly recovering from a severe inflammatory disorder : yet your letter, and your fine sonnets, have remained constantly on my mind, and I now take up my pen to thank you most warmly for the pleasure which they have given me. I hope my friend Watson has seen the noble wreath of laurel which your animated Muse has woven for him : I entreat you to send me the two others, which I long to see. The few copies which were printed of the Latin ode, are so dispersed, that I have not one for myself, and would print a few more, if a learned friend of mine had not engaged to publish it with notes historical and critical, for want of which it is in some parts obscure. You may depend on receiving one of the first copies that can see the light ; and my seven Arabian poets will wait upon you as soon as the European dresses are finished. I take the liberty to enclose an ode

composed without preparation, and almost without any premeditation : it is the work of a few hours. In truth, when I attended the wedding, I had no thought of writing ; but the young ladies would not hear of an excuse : you must therefore make all due allowance for poetry by compulsion.

I am, &c.

LXXX.

To Lord Althorpe.

January 5, 1782.

O la bella cosa il far niente ! This was my exclamation, my dear lord, on the 12th of last month, when I found myself, as I thought, at liberty to be a rambler, or an idler, or any thing I pleased : but but my *mal di gola* took ample revenge for my abuse and contempt of it, when I wrote to you, by confining me twelve days with a fever and quinsy ; and I am now so cramped by the approaching session at Oxford, that I cannot make any long excursion. I enclose my tragical song of "A Shepherdess going," with Mazzanti's music, of which my opinion at present is, that the modulation is very artificial, and the harmony good ; but that Pergolesi (whom the modern Italians are such puppies as to undervalue) would have made it more pathetic and *heart-rending*, if I may compose such a word : I long to

hear it sung by Mrs. Poyntz. Pray present the enclosed, in my name, to lady Althorpe. I hope that I shall, in a short time, be able to think of you, when I read these charming lines of Catullus :*

And soon, to be completely blest,
 Soon may a young Torquatus rise ;
 Who, hanging on his mother's breast,
 To his known sire shall turn his eyes ;
 Outstretch his infant arms awhile ;
 Half ope his little lips, and smile.—(*Translation.*)

What a beautiful picture ! can Dominichino equal it ? How weak are all arts in comparison of poetry and rhetoric ! Instead, however, of Torquatus, I would read Spencerus. Do you not think that I have discovered the true use of the fine arts—namely, in relaxing the mind after toil ? Man was born for labour ; his configuration, his passions, his restlessness, all prove it ; but labour would wear him out, and the purpose of it be defeated, if he had not intervals of pleasure ; and unless that pleasure be innocent, both he and society must suffer. Now, what pleasures are more harmless, if they be nothing else, than those afforded by polite arts, and polite literature ? Love was given us by the Author of our being, as the reward of virtue, and the solace of care ; but the base and sordid

* The original is quoted by Mr. Jones :—

Torquatus volo parvulus,
 Matris è gremio suæ,
 Porrigens teneras manus,
 Dulce rideat ad patrem,
 Semi-hiante labello.

forms of *artificial* (which I oppose to *natural*) society in which we live, have encircled that heavenly rose with so many thorns, that the wealthy alone can gather it with prudence. On the other hand, mere pleasure, to which the idle are not justly entitled, soon satiates, and leaves a vacuity in the mind, more unpleasant than actual pain. A just mixture, or interchange of labour and pleasures, appears alone conducive to such happiness as this life affords.—Farewell. I have no room to add my useless name, and still more useless professions of friendship.

LXXXI.

To Mr. Thomas Yeates.

SIR,

Lamb's Buildings, April 25, 1782.

It was not till within these very few days, that I received, on my return from the circuit, your obliging letter, dated the 18th of March, which, had I been so fortunate as to receive earlier, I should have made a point of answering immediately. The Society for Constitutional Information, by electing me one of their members, will confer upon me an honour, which I am wholly unconscious of deserving, but which is so flattering to me, that I accept of their offer with pleasure and

gratitude. I should indeed long ago have testified my regard for so useful an institution, by an offer of my humble service in promoting it, if I had not really despaired, in my present situation, of being able to attend your meetings as often as I should ardently wish.

My future life shall certainly be devoted to the support of that excellent constitution, which it is the object of your society to unfold and elucidate ; and from this resolution, long and deliberately made, no prospects, no connexions, no station here or abroad, no fear of danger, or hope of advantage to myself, shall ever deter or allure me.

A form of government so apparently conducive to the true happiness of the community, must be admired as soon as it is understood ; and if reason and virtue have any influence in human breasts, ought to be preserved by any exertions, and at any hazard. Care must now be taken, lest, by reducing the regal power to its just level, we raise the aristocratical to a dangerous height ; since it is from the people that we can deduce the obligation of our laws, and the authority of magistrates.

On the people depend the welfare, the security, and the permanence of every legal government ; in the people must reside all substantial power ; and to the people must all those, in whose ability and knowledge we sometimes wisely, often imprudently confide, be always accountable for the due exercise of that power with which they are for a time intrusted.

If the properties of all good government be considered as duly distributed in the different parts of

our limited republic, goodness ought to be the distinguished attribute of the crown, wisdom of the aristocracy, but power and fortitude of the people.

May justice and humanity prevail in them all !
I am, sir, your very faithful and obedient servant,

W. JONES.

LXXXII.

To Mr. Thomas Yeates.

SIR, Lamb's Buildings, Temple, June 7, 1782.

I LATELY met with some dangerous doctrine concerning the constitution of England, in the works of an admired English writer: the doctrine is so dangerous, that an immediate confutation of it seems highly necessary; and the writer so admired, that his opinions, good or bad, must naturally have a very general influence. It was the opinion, in short, of the late ingenious Henry Fielding, that "the constitution of this island was nothing fixed but just as variable as its weather;" and he treated the contrary notion as a ridiculous error: now, if this doctrine be well founded, our society will soon, I imagine, think it wise to dissolve themselves; since it is hardly consistent with the gravity of sensible men, to collect and impart information, like the makers of almanacks, upon any thing so

uncertain as the weather : if, on the other hand, the error be palpably on the side of Mr. Fielding, you will not only proceed with assiduity in your laudable design of rendering our constitution universally known, but will be at least equal, in usefulness and true dignity, to any society that ever was formed. His words are these, in the preface to his tract, *On the Increase of Robberies*, dedicated to Lord Chancellor Hardwicke : “ There is nothing so much talked of, and so little understood, in this country, as the constitution. It is a word in the mouth of every man : and yet when we come to discourse of the matter, there is no subject on which our ideas are more confused and perplexed. Some, when they speak of the constitution, confine their notions to the law ; others, to the legislature ; others again, to the governing or executive part ; and many there are who jumble all these together in one idea. One error, however, is common to them all : for all seem to have the conception of something uniform and permanent ; as if the constitution of England partook rather of the nature of the soil than the climate ; and was as fixed and constant as the former, not as changing and variable as the latter. Now, in this word, the constitution, are included the original and fundamental law of the kingdom, from whence all powers are derived, and by which they are circumscribed ; all legislative and executive authority ; all those municipal provisions, which are commonly called laws ; and lastly, the customs, manners, and habits of the people. These joined together, do, I apprehend, form the political, as the several members of the body, the animal economy, with the humours and

habit, compose that which is called the natural constitution."

He adds a paragraph or two of elegant, but idle allusions to the Platonic philosophy; as if we lived under the polity of Plato, not in the days of William the Norman. Now, of all words easy to be comprehended, the easiest, in my humble opinion, is the word constitution: it is the great system of public, in contradistinction to private and criminal law; and comprises all those articles which Blackstone arranges in his first volume, under the rights of persons, and of which he gives a perspicuous analysis. Whatever then relates to the rights of persons—either absolute rights, as the enjoyment of liberty, security, and property; or relative, that is, in the public relations of magistrates and people—makes a part of that majestic whole, which we properly call the constitution: of those magistrates, some are subordinate, and some supreme; as the legislative or parliament, which ought to consist of delegates from every independent voice in the nation; and the executive or the king, whose legal rights for the general good are called prerogative. The people are the aggregate body or community, and are in an ecclesiastical, civil, military, or maritime state.

This constitutional or public law is partly unwritten, and grounded upon immemorial usage; and partly written, or enacted by the legislative power: but the unwritten or common law contains the true spirit of our constitution; the written has often most unjustifiably altered the form of it: the common law is the collected wisdom of many centuries, having been used and approved by

successive generations ; but the statutes frequently contain the whims of a few leading men, and sometimes of the mere individuals employed to draw them : lastly, the unwritten law is eminently favourable, and the written generally, hostile to the absolute rights of persons.

But though this inestimable law be called unwritten, yet the only evidence of it is in writing preserved in the public records, judicial, official, and parliamentary, and explained in works of acknowledged authority. Positive acts of the legislature may indeed change the form of the constitution ; but as, in the system of private law, the narrowness or rigour of our forensic rules may be enlarged or softened by the interposition of parliament ; (for our courts of equity are wholly of a different nature) so all legislative provisions, which oppose the spirit of the constitution, may be corrected, agreeably to that very spirit, by the people or nation at large, who form, as it were, the high court of appeal in cases of constitutional equity ; and their sense must be collected from the petitions which they present, expressed with moderation and respect, yet with all the firmness which their cause justifies, and all the dignity which truly becomes them. I am, sir,

Your very faithful humble servant,

W. JONES.

LXXXIII.

To the Bishop of St. Asaph.

MY LORD, Wimbledon Park, Sept. 13, 1782.

IF your lordship received my letter from Calais, you will not be much surprised to see the date of this, and the place where I now am writing, while lady Spencer is making morning visits. Mr. and Mrs. Poyntz have this instant left us. Lord Althorpe being in Northamptonshire, I must give myself some consolation for my disappointment in missing him, by scribbling a few lines to him, as soon as I have finished these with which I now trouble your lordship. My excursion to the United Provinces (which has been the substitute for my intended expedition to the United States), was extremely pleasing and improving to me. I returned last Monday; and finding all my friends dispersed in various parts of England, am going for a few days into Buckinghamshire, whence I shall go to Oxford, and must continue there till the sessions. Should your lordship be in Hampshire any time in October, and should it be in all respects convenient to you, I will accept, this year, with great pleasure, the obliging invitation to Chilbolton, which I was unfortunately prevented from accepting last year. I

lament the unhappy disensions among our great men, and clearly see the vanity of my anxious wish, that they would have played in tune some time longer in the political concert.

The delays about the India judgeship have, it is true, greatly injured me ; but, with my patience and assiduity, I could easily recover my lost ground. I must, however, take the liberty here to allude to a most obliging letter of your lordship from Chilbolton, which I received so long ago as last November, but was prevented from answering till you came to town. It was inexpressibly flattering to me ; but my intimate knowledge of the nature of my profession, obliges me to assure you, that it requires the whole man, and admits of no concurrent pursuits : that, consequently, I must either give it up, or it will engross me so much, that I shall not, for some years, be able to enjoy the society of my friends, or the sweets of liberty. Whether it be a wise part to live uncomfortably, in order to die wealthy, is another question ; but this I know by experience, and have heard old practitioners make the same observation—that a lawyer who is in earnest, must be chained to his chambers and the bar for ten or twelve years together. In regard to your lordship's indulgent and flattering prediction, that my *Essay on Bailment* would be my last work, and that, for the future, business and the public would allow me to write no more, I doubt whether it will be accomplished, whatever may be my practice or situation : for I have already prepared many tracts on jurisprudence ; and when I see the volumes written by Lord Coke, whose annual gains were twelve or fourteen thousand pounds ; by Lord Bacon,

sir Matthew Hale, and a number of judges and chancellors ; I cannot think that I should be hurt in my professional career, by publishing now and then a law tract upon some interesting branch of the science ; and the science itself is indeed so complex, that, without writing, which is the chain of memory, it is impossible to remember a thousandth part of what we read or hear : since it is my wish therefore to become in time as great a lawyer as Sulpicius, I shall probably leave as many volumes of my works as he is said to have written. As to politics, I begin to think, that the natural propensity of men to dissent from one another, will prevent them, in a corrupt age, from uniting in any laudable design ; and, at present, I have nothing to do but to rest on my oars, which the Greek philosophers, I believe, called *πρηνειν*, a word which Cicero applies, in one of his letters, to the same subject.

My best respects to the ladies ; for whom I would certainly have brought some Virginian nightingales, if my western expedition had taken place ; since I was informed by the captain, with whom I should have sailed, that they might have been kept in the cabin without any danger.

LXXXIV.

To Mr. Baron Eyre.

DEAR SIR,

Oct. 2, 1782.

I HAVE been in England about a fortnight, and was made happy by learning in John-street, that you had long been restored to health from the illness which confined you, to my inexpressible concern, at the time when I set out for the continent. The cause of my return is, in a few words, this : I ought to have foreseen, what I nevertheless did not expect ; that the same timidity or imbecillity, which made my unhappy friend declare, that he neither could nor would go to Virginia without me, would make him declare, when he saw the sails and the waves, that he neither would nor could go at all. A dread of some imaginary danger so enervated him, that he kept his bed, and wrote me word, that if he stayed a week longer at Nantes, he should lose his reason or his life. My expostulations had some little effect ; but there was no dependence, I found, on a man who had none, he confessed, upon himself ; and when I discovered, that no ship, with even tolerable accommodation, would sail till September, so that I could not keep my word with my friends in England, by returning from America before the new year, I came back through Normandy about the middle of August, and having

a few weeks to spare, made a very pleasant and improving excursion into Holland, which I traversed from south to north. The detail of my expedition may not perhaps be unentertaining to you, when I have the pleasure of conversing with you at your leisure; and I am not without hope of enjoying that pleasure, if you continue at Ruscombe, before the term begins. I stay here till the sessions are over; and would immediately after take my chance of finding you in Berkshire, but am called upon to keep an old promise of visiting the bishop of St. Asaph near Andover, and must spend a day or two with my friend Poyntz. I can easily conceive how little time you can have to write letters; yet if you could find a moment to let me know how long you propose to remain in the country, I would not be in your neighbourhood without paying my respects to you, and I would indeed have taken Ruscombe in my way to Oxford, if I had not been engaged to make a visit in Buckinghamshire. As to myself, I find such distraction among my political friends, that I should be glad (if I had no other motive) to be fixed in India, at the distance of 16,000 miles from all their animosities: but I am unhappily more unsettled than ever; for * * * * writes me word, that he has nothing more at heart than to open some situation for me in India. What this means, I know not; but it looks like some new plan, which may probably hang undecided from session to session. On the whole, I greatly fear that it would have been happy for me, and perhaps for millions, if India had never existed, or if we had known as little of it as of Japan.

LXXXV.

To Lord Althorpe.

MY DEAR LORD,

Oct. 5, 1782.

YOUR friendly letter caught me in Buckinghamshire, before I came to college, where I have been for some days sole governor, and almost sole inhabitant of Alfred's peaceful mansion, till Mr. Windham surprised me agreeably, by coming with a design of passing some time in this academical retreat. You, in the mean while, are taking healthful and pleasing exercise in Norfolk, where Mr. Fox, I understand, is also shooting partridges; and you are both ready, no doubt, to turn your firelocks against the Dutch, should they make their appearance in your fields: when I was in Zealand, they expected us; and if they stand upon the ceremony of the first visit, we shall not, I imagine, meet very soon.

In regard to my expectation of seeing a little good attained for our miserable country, I am not apt to be sanguine, but rather inclined to fear the worst than to expect the best, I rejoice, however, at the distrust conceived, by many honest men, of those now in power: my opinion is, that power should always be distrusted, in whatever hands it is placed. As to America, I know not what * * * * * thinks: but this I know; that the sturdy Trans-

Atlantic yeomanry will neither be dragooned nor bamboozled out of their liberty. His principles in regard to our internal government are, unless I am deluded by his professions, such as my reason approves; and, which is better, such as I know to be approved in clear terms by our recorded constitution. The friends of * * * * were too monarchical, and those of * * * * far too aristocratical for me; and if it were possible to see an administration too democratical, I should equally dislike it. There must be a mixture of all the powers, in due proportions weighed and measured by the laws, or the nation cannot exist without misery or shame. I may write all this consistently with good manners and with friendship, because I know the excellence of your understanding and soundness of your principles; and, independently of my presumption that all your actions must be wise and just, I see and applaud the motive which must have induced you to resign an office, which you were not at first much inclined to accept. I am confident also, that you would as little endure a Swedish monarchy, as a Venetian aristocracy. I enclose a little *jeu d'esprit*,* which I wrote at Paris: it was printed here by a society, who, if they will steer clear of party, will do more good to Britain than all the philosophers and antiquaries of Somerset House. But to speak the truth, I greatly doubt, whether they, or any other men in this country, can do it substantial good. The nation, as Demosthenes said, will be

* The *jeu d'esprit* mentioned here, was a Dialogue between a Farmer and Country Gentleman, on the Principles of Government.

fed like a consumptive patient, with chicken broth and panada, which will neither suffer him to expire, nor keep him wholly alive. As to myself, if my friends are resolved to assail one another, instead of concurring in any great and laudable effort for the general safety, I have no course left, but to act and speak rightly to the best of my understanding ; but I have an additional motive for wishing to obtain an office in India, where I might have some prospect of contributing to the happiness of millions, or at least of alleviating their misery ; and serving my country essentially, whilst I benefited my fellow-creatures.

When the sessions are over, I shall hasten to Chilbolton, and perform an old promise of passing a few days with the best of bishops ; after which I shall take Midgham, and Baron Eyre's at Ruscombe, in my way to London, where I must be at the beginning of the term. A Persian book is just printed here, said to have been composed by Tamerlane, who confesses, that he governed men by four great arts—bribing, dividing, amusing, and keeping in suspense. How far it may be an object with modern Tamerlanes, or sultans of India, to govern me, I cannot tell ; but as I cannot be bribed, without losing my senses, nor divided, without losing my life, I will neither be amused, nor kept long in suspense ; and, indeed, I have so high an opinion of Lord Ashburton, who never professes more than he means, that I do not suspect any artifice in that business.

LXXXVI.

To Lady Spencer.

MADAM,

Chilbolton, Oct. 21, 1782.

THOUGH I wrote so lately to your ladyship, and cannot hope, by any thing I can now say, to make amends for the dulness of my last letter; yet, as some of the ladies here are this moment writing to St. James's Place, I cannot prevail on myself to decline joining so agreeable a party, especially as the very favourable accounts which were last night received of lord Spencer's health have given me spirits, and made me eager to offer my sincere congratulations. Yes; I rejoice with the truest sincerity, that his lordship's health is so likely to be re-established; for I cannot name a man of rank in the nation, in whose health, the public and all mankind, as well as his family and friends, are more truly interested. I have passed my time at Chilbolton so agreeably, that ten days have appeared like one; and it gives me concern, that the near approach of the term will oblige me to leave so charming and improving a society at the end of this week; after which I shall hope to find my friends at Midgham in perfect health; and then farewell, a long farewell to all my rational and interesting pleasures, which must be succeeded by the drudgery of drawing bills

in equity, the toil of answering cases, the squabbles of the bar, and the more vexatious dissensions and conflicts of the political world, which I vainly deprecated, and now as vainly deplore. How happy would it be, if statesmen had more music in their souls, and could bring themselves to consider, that what harmony is in a concert, such is union in a state : but in the great orchestra of politics, I find so many musicians out of humour, and instruments out of tune, that I am more tormented by such dissonance than the man in Hogarth's print, and am more desirous than ever of being transported to the distance of five thousand leagues from all this fatal discord. Without a metaphor, I lament with anguish the bitterness and animosity with which some of my friends have been assailing others ; as if empty altercation could be the means of procuring any good to this afflicted country. I find myself, in more instances than one, like poor Petrarch, wishing to pass my days

Fra' magnanimi pochi ; à chi 'l ben piace,
Di lor chi m' assicura ?
Io vo gridando *pace, pace, pace.*

—but I shall not be heard, and must console myself with the pleasing hope, that your ladyship, and the few friends of virtue and humanity, will agree in this sentiment with, &c.

WILLIAM JONES.

LXXXVII.

From the Duchess of Devonshire.

MY DEAR MR. JONES, Plimton, Oct. 28, 1782.

I AM very happy that the fear of losing a privilege, which you are so good as to say is precious to you, has induced you to write to me ; for I assure you, that your letters give me very great pleasure, and that they, as well as the few times in which we meet, make me regret very much that the turn of your public engagements takes you so much from societies where you are wished for.

I agree with you, that the political world is strangely torn. If you had been in parliament at this crisis, you would have felt yourself in an uncomfortable situation, I confess ; but I cannot think, that with the good Whig principles you are blessed with, private friendships or connexions would have prevailed on you to remain silent or inactive.

Chi vuol Catone amico,
Facilmente l' avrà : Sia fido a Roma.

This I think would have been the test of your political friendship.

I am rejoiced that there is a chance of your returning to poetry. I had a very valuable present made me by Dr. Blagden, physician to the camp, of your ode in imitation of Callistratus. I wish I understood Greek, that I might read something Mr. Paradise has written at the top of it. I will attempt to copy it; and after the various characters I have, in days of yore, seen you decipher, I will not despair of your making out Greek, though written by me.

*Αἱ Χαριτες, τεμενος τι λαβειν ὅπερ ουκι πεισειη
Ζητευσαι, ψυχην ευρεν Ἰωνιονου.**

I shall expect to see the poem something sooner than the rest of your friends; and, I assure you, the having so seldom the pleasure of meeting you, does not diminish the sincerity with which I shall ever retain that title.—If you are still at Chilbolton, pray give my love to the family there, and tell Miss Shipley to write to me.

My seal is a talisman, which if you can send me the explanation of, I shall be much obliged to you.

* The Graces, seeking a shrine that would never decay, found the soul of Jones.

LXXXVIII.

*From Lord Ashburton.**

MY DEAR SIR,

March 3, 1783.

IT is with little less satisfaction to myself than it can give you, that I send you the enclosed; and I do assure you, there are few events in which I could have felt so sensible a mortification, as in that of your finally missing this favourite object. The weather suggests to me, as no slight topic of congratulation, your being relieved from such a journey, and under such circumstances, as your last favour intimates you had in contemplation for Wednesday; but when I consider this appointment as securing to you at once, two of the first objects of human pursuit, those of ambition and love, I feel it a subject of very serious and cordial congratulation, which I desire you to accept, and to convey accordingly. I am, with every good wish, dear sir, your faithful humble servant,

ASHBURTON.

* Mr. Jones, through the influence of lord Ashburton, was appointed judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature at Fort William, in Bengal. When that appointment was conferred upon him, he received the honour of knighthood; and, shortly afterwards, married Anna Maria Shipley, eldest daughter of the bishop of St. Asaph.

LXXXIX.

From Dr. Franklin.

DEAR FRIEND,

Passy, March 17, 1783.

I DULY received your obliging letter of November 15th : you will have since learnt how much I was then, and have been continually engaged in public affairs, and your goodness will excuse my not having answered it sooner. You announced your intended marriage with my much respected friend Miss Anna Maria, which I assure you gave me great pleasure, as I cannot conceive a match more likely to be happy, from the amiable qualities each of you possess so plentifully. You mention its taking place as soon as a prudent attention to worldly interests would permit. I just now learn from Mr. Hodgson, that you are appointed to an honourable and profitable place in the Indies ; so I expect now soon to hear of the wedding, and to receive the profile. With the good bishop's permission, I will join my blessing with his ; adding my wishes that you may return from that corrupting country, with a great deal of money honestly acquired, and with full as much virtue as you carry out with you.

The engraving of my medal, which you know was projected before the peace, is but just finished :

• none are yet struck in hard metal, but will in a few days. In the mean time, having this good opportunity by Mr. Penn, I send you one of the epreuves. You will see that I have profited by some of your ideas, and adopted the mottos you were so kind as to furnish.

I am at present quite recovered from my late illness, and flatter myself that I may, in the ensuing summer, be able to undertake a trip to England, for the pleasure of seeing once more my dear friends there, among whom the bishop and his family stand foremost in my estimation and affection.

I thank you for your good wishes respecting me : mine for your welfare and prosperity are not less earnest and sincere ; being, with great truth, dear sir, your affectionate friend, and most obedient servant,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

* * * * *

XC.

*To Lord Ashburton.**

April 27, 1783.

YOUR kind letter found me on board the Crocodile: I should have been very unhappy had it missed me, since I have long habituated myself to set the highest value on every word you speak, and every line you write. Of the two enclosed letters to our friends, Impey and Chambers, I will take the greatest care, and will punctually follow your directions as to the first of them. My departure was sudden indeed; but the Admiralty were so anxious for the sailing of this frigate, and their orders were so peremptory, that it was impossible to wait for any thing but a breeze. Our voyage has hitherto been tolerably pleasant, and, since we left the Channel, very quick. We begin to see albigores about the ship, and to perceive an agreeable change of climate. Our days, though short, give me ample time for study, recreation, and exercise; but my joy and delight proceed from the surprising health and spirits of Anna Maria, who

* Sir William Jones embarked for India in the Crocodile frigate; and left England in April, 1783.

joins me in affectionate remembrance to lady Ashburton. As to you, my dear lord, we consider you as the spring and fountain of our happiness ; as the author and parent ; a Roman would have added, (what the coldness of our northern language will hardly admit) the god of our fortunes. It is possible, indeed, that by incessant labour and irksome attendance at the bar, I might, in due time, have attained all that my very limited ambition could aspire to ; but in no other station than that which I owe to your friendship, could I have gratified at once my boundless curiosity concerning the people of the East, continued the exercise of my profession, in which I sincerely delight, and enjoyed at the same time the comforts of domestic life. The grand jury of Denbighshire have found, I understand, the bill against the dean of St. Asaph, for publishing my dialogue ; but as an indictment for a theoretical essay on government was, I believe, never before known, I have no apprehension for the consequences. As to the doctrines in the tract, though I shall certainly not preach them to the Indians, who must and will be governed by absolute power, yet I shall go through life with a persuasion, that they are just and rational, that substantial freedom is both the daughter and parent of virtue, and that virtue is the only source of public and private felicity.

Farewell.

In the course of his voyage, sir William Jones stopped at Madeira, and, after ten additional weeks of prosperous sailing, arrived at Hinsuan or Joanna. Of this island, where he remained a few days only, he has published an interest-

ing and amusing description. He expatiates with rapture on his approach to it, delineates, with the skill of an artist, the beauties of the scenery, and sketches, with the discriminating pen of a philosopher, the characters and manners of the unpolished, but hospitable natives. The novelty of the scene was attractive, and its impression upon his mind is strongly marked by the following just and elegant reflection, which, in substance, is more than once repeated in his writings:—"If life were not too short for the complete discharge of all our respective duties, public and private, and for the acquisition even of necessary knowledge in any degree of perfection—with how much pleasure and improvement might a great part of it be spent in admiring the beauties of this wonderful orb, and contemplating the nature of man in all its varieties!"

It would be injustice to his memory, to pass over without particular notice, the sensible and dignified rebuke, with which he repelled the rude attack of Mussulman bigotry on the divinity of our Saviour. During a visit which he made to a native of the island, a Coran was produced for his inspection, and his attention was pointedly directed to a passage in a commentary, accusing the Christians of blasphemy, in calling our Saviour the Son of God. "The commentator," he replied, "was much to blame for passing so indiscriminate and hasty a censure: the title which gave your legislator, and which gives you such offence, was often applied in Judæa, by a bold figure, agreeably to the Hebrew idiom, though unusual in Arabic, to angels, to holy men, and even to all mankind, who are commanded to call God their father; and in this large sense, the apostle to the Romans calls the elect *the children of God*, and the Messiah, *the first born among many brethren*; but the words *only begotten*, are applied transcendently and incomparably to him alone: and as for me, who believe the Scriptures, which you also profess to believe, though you assert without proof that we have altered them—I cannot refuse him an appellation, though far surpassing our reason, by which he is distinguished in the Gospel; and the believers in Mohammed, who expressly names him the Messiah, and pronounces him to have been born of a virgin, (which alone might fully justify the phrase condemned by

this author) are themselves condemnable, for cavilling at words, when they cannot object to the substance of our faith, consistently with their own."

This quotation affords a decisive proof of the belief of sir William Jones in the sublime doctrines of the Christian religion. Had he been even indifferent to his faith, he would have been silent on an occasion where he could expect neither candour nor concessions from his antagonists. Indeed, he was well aware, that a religious dispute with those zealots would have been fruitless and unseasonable, and might have been dangerous; but as it was inconsistent with his principles to disavow or conceal what he firmly believed and professed, he could not suffer the attack to pass without reprehension; and he grounded it on premises, which his opponents could not dispute, nor did they venture to answer.

From Hinzuan to the Ganges nothing material occurred. He landed at Calcutta in September, 1783; and in December following, entered upon his judicial functions.

XCI.

*To Warren Hastings, Esq.**

MY DEAR SIR,

INDEPENDENTLY of my general presumption, that whatever you determine is right, I cannot but admit the solidity of the reasons which induce you to

* After his arrival in India, sir William Jones devised the institution of a society at Calcutta, as a means of concentrating and preserving much valuable knowledge relative to

decline that precedence, to which, if our society were in its full vigour, instead of being in its cradle, you would have a title, paramount to all who have been, are, or will be, in this country. Every part of your letter (except that which your kind indulgence makes so honourable to me) carries with it the clearest conviction. Your first reason (namely, an unwillingness to accept an honorary trust, and want of leisure for one that may require an active part) must appear satisfactory to all. I trust, you will consider our act as proceeding solely from our anxiety to give you that distinction, which justice obliged us to give. As to myself, I could never have been satisfied, if, in traversing the sea of knowledge, I had fallen in with a ship of your rate and station, without striking my flag. One thing more, my dear sir, I must assure you of; that in whatever manner your objections had been stated, I should have thought them just and wise; and if it were not for the pleasure which your friendly communication of them has given me, I should repent of the trouble which our intended homage has occasioned.

I return Mr. Turner's letters, with many thanks for the entertainment which lady J. and myself have received from them. I promise myself much delight and instruction from his conversation; and hope, that when he shall think proper to communi-

Asia. The presidency of this society was offered to Warren Hastings, Esq. then governor-general of India; but Mr. Hastings, for reasons which had been anticipated, declined accepting it. Sir William Jones, on the receipt of his answer, addressed the following letter to Mr. Hastings.

cate a relation of his travels,* he will prefer our society to that of London. I will pay my respects to you in the evening, and am concerned, from a selfish motive, that the place where I now write, will so soon lose one of its greatest advantages. Believe me to be, with unfeigned regard, dear sir,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

WILLIAM JONES.

* * * * *

XCII.

To Mr. Justice Hyde.

Friday Evening, at the Chambers, Jan. 1784.

DEAR SIR,

RAMLOCHUND has raised my curiosity, by telling me, that when you had occasion to receive the evidence of some Mugs, they produced a book in strange square characters, which they called Zuboor: now, Zuboor is the name by which the Psalms of David are known in Asia. May not this book be the Psalms in old Hebrew or Samaritan, and the people a sect of Jews? Can you give me any information on this head?

* This relation was published in 1800, under the title of "An Account of an Embassy to the Court of Teshoo Lama in Tibet," &c. by Captain Samuel Turner.

XCIII.

To Mr. Justice Hyde.

Garden, May 14, 1784.

MANY thanks, my dear sir, for your kind concern and attention. I was on the bridge by Col. Tolly's house in the midst of the storm, my horses mad with the fear of the lightning, and my carriage every moment in danger of being upset by the wind; I was wet to the skin, and saved from worse inconvenience by the diligence of my servants, who took off the horses, and drew the carriage to a place of safety. I am nevertheless in good health; but lady Jones is not quite recovered from a severe cold and rheumatism, attended with a fever.

Remember, that I am always ready to relieve you at the chambers in the Loll Bazar,* and will cheerfully take the labouring oar next month if you please; especially, as I propose to spend the long vacation in a floating house, and to leave Calcutta as soon as the session is over; but I shall return dead or alive before the 22d of October. I am inexpressibly amused by a Persian translation of an

* A house in Calcutta, where the puisné judges of the supreme court of judicature attended by rotation in the evening, as justices of the peace,

old Sanscrit book, called Sîry Bha'gwat, which comprises almost the whole of the Hindu religion, and contains the life and achievements of Crîshen : it is by far the most entertaining book, on account of its novelty and wildness, that I ever read.— Farewell, and believe me, dear sir, ever affectionately yours.

WILLIAM JONES.

XCIV.

*To Dr. Patrick Russel.**

Calcutta, March 10, 1784.

You would readily excuse my delay in answering your obliging letter, if you could form an idea of the incessant hurry and confusion in which I have been kept ever since my arrival in Bengal, by necessary business, or necessary formalities, and by the difficulty of settling myself to my mind, in a country so different from that which I have left. I am, indeed, at best, but a bad correspondent; for I never write by candle light, and find so much Arabic or Persian to read, that all my leisure in a morning is hardly sufficient for a thousandth part

* Author of a splendid work on Indian Serpents, and of a Treatise on the Plague,

of the reading that would be highly agreeable and useful to me ; and as I purpose to spend the long vacation up the country, I wish to be a match in conversation with the learned natives, whom I may happen to meet.

I rejoice that you are so near, but lament that you are not nearer ; and am not without hope, that you may one day be tempted to visit Bengal, where, I flatter myself, you will give me as much of your company as possible.

Many thanks for your kind hints in regard to my health. As to me, I do not expect, as long as I stay in India, to be free from a bad digestion, the *morbis literatorum*, for which there is hardly any remedy, but abstinence from too much food, literary and culinary. I rise before the sun, and bathe after a gentle ride ; my diet is light and sparing, and I go early to rest ; yet the activity of my mind is too strong for my constitution, though naturally not infirm ; and I must be satisfied with a valetudinarian state of health. If you should meet with any curiosities on the coast, either in your botanical rambles or in reading, and will communicate them to our society, lately instituted for inquiring into the history, civil and natural, the antiquities, arts, sciences, and literature of Asia, we shall give you our hearty thanks. There is an Abyssinian here, who knew Mr. Bruce at Gwender. I have examined him, and he confirms Bruce's account. Every day supplies me with something new in Oriental learning ; and if I were to stay here half a century, I should be continually amused.

XCV.

To _____

April 13, 1784.

* * * * *

I AM discouraged from writing to you as copiously as I wish, by the fear that my letter may never reach you. I enclose, however, a hymn to the Indian Cupid, which is here said to be the only correct specimen of Hindu mythology that has appeared: it is certainly new and quite original, except the form of the stanza, which is Milton's. I add the character of lord Ashburton, which my zeal for his fame prompted me to publish.*

* * * * *

* Lord Ashburton died on the 18th of August, 1783. His character, written by sir William Jones, is published in vol. iv. of his works. The following extract from it will show the gratitude and sensibility of the writer:—"For some months before his death, the nursery had been his chief delight, and gave him more pleasure than the cabinet could have afforded: but this parental affection, which had been a source of so much felicity, was probably a cause of his fatal illness. He had lost one son, and expected to lose another, when the author of this painful tribute to his memory

Had I dreamt that the dialogue would have made such a stir, I should certainly have taken more pains with it. I will never cease to avow and justify the doctrine comprised in it. I meant it merely as an imitation of one of Plato's, where a boy, wholly ignorant of geometry, is made, by a few simple questions, to demonstrate a proposition; and I intended to inculcate, that the principles of government were so obvious and intelligible, that a clown might be brought to understand them. As to raising sedition, I as much thought of raising a church.

My dialogue contains my system, which I have ever avowed and ever will avow; but I perfectly agree (and no man of sound intellect can disagree), that such a system is wholly inapplicable to this country, where millions of men are so wedded to inveterate prejudices and habits, that if liberty could be forced upon them by Britain, it would make them as miserable as the cruelest despotism.

Pray remember me affectionately to all my friends at the bar, whom I have not time to enumerate; and assure my academical and professional friends, that I will write to them all when I have leisure.

Farewell, &c.

parted from him, with tears in his eyes, little hoping to see him again in a perishable state. As he perceives, without affectation, that his tears now steal from him, and begin to moisten the paper on which he writes, he reluctantly leaves a subject which he could not soon have exhausted; and when he also shall resign his life to the great Giver of it, he desires no other decoration of his humble grave-stone, than this honourable truth:

With none to flatter, none to recommend,
Dunning approved, and mark'd him as a friend."

XCVI.

To Charles Chapman, Esq.

Gardens near Allipore, April 26, 1784.

ALLOW me, dear sir, to give you the warmest thanks, in my own name, and in that of our infant society, for the pleasure which we have received from your interesting account of Cochin-china, with considerable extracts from which we have been favoured by our patrons. Our meetings are well attended, and the society may really be said, considering the recent time of its establishment, to flourish.

We have been rather indisposed, the weather being such as we had no idea of in England—excessive heat at noon, and an incessant high wind from morning to night; at this moment it blows a hurricane, and my study reminds me of my cabin at sea. Our way of life, however, is quite pastoral in this retired spot; as my prime favourites, among all our pets, are two large English sheep, which came with us from Spithead, and, having narrowly escaped the knife, are to live as long and as happily with us as they can: they follow us for bread, and are perfectly domestic. We are literally lulled to sleep by Persian nightingales, and cease to wonder, that the Bulbul, with a thousand

tales, makes such a figure in Oriental poetry.— Since I am resolved to sit regularly in court as long as I am well, (not knowing how soon I may be forced to remit my attention to business) I shall not be at liberty to enter my budgerow till near the end of July, and must be again in Calcutta on the 22d of October; so that my time will be very limited: and I shall wish, if possible, to see Benares.*

XCVII.

To Charles Chapman, Esq.

Jungipore, August 30, 1784.

NOTHING but a series of severe attacks of illness could have prevented my replying long ago to your friendly letter. After resisting them by temperance and exercise for some time, I was quite overpowered by a fever, which has confined me ten weeks to my couch, but is now almost entirely abated,

* The principal object of his meditated excursion was to open sources of information on topics entirely new in the republic of letters. The indisposition which he mentions, not without apprehensions of its continuance, had not altogether left him when he commenced his journey; and during the progress of it, returned with a severity, which long held the public in anxious suspense, before any hopes could be entertained of its favourable termination.

though it has left me in a state of extreme weakness. I had a relapse at Raugamutty, which obliged me to stay three weeks at Afzalbang, where the judgment and attention of Dr. Glas prevented perhaps serious consequences. I have spent two days at this place; and I find myself so much better, that I propose to continue my voyage this evening: whether I shall be able to go farther than Patna, (I long to see Benares,) is very uncertain. This is only the second attempt I have made to write since my illness; and as I hold my pen with some difficulty, I will say no more, than that I am, with great esteem, &c.

P.S. I cannot help adding, that your proposal of extracting such parts of your very interesting narrative concerning Cochin-china, as you may think proper to deposit among the archives of our society, is the very thing I wished, and I really think it will be one of our most valuable tracts.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE PIETY OF SIR WILLIAM
JONES.

BUT the thoughts and attention of sir William Jones were not confined to the perishable concerns of this world only; and what was the subject of his meditations in health, was more forcibly impressed upon his mind during illness. He knew the duty of

resignation to the will of his Maker, and of dependence on the merits of a Redeemer : these sentiments are expressed in a short prayer, which he composed during his indisposition, in September, 1784, and which I here insert :

“ O Thou Bestower of all good ; if it please Thee to continue my easy tasks in this life, grant me strength to perform them as a faithful servant : but if thy wisdom hath willed to end them by this thy visitation, admit me, not weighing my unworthiness, but through thy mercy declared in Christ, into thy heavenly mansions, that I may continually advance in happiness, by advancing in true knowledge and awful love of Thee. Thy will be done !”

Among many additional proofs which might be given of the religious principles of sir William Jones, is the following short prayer, composed on waking, July 27, 1783, at sea, also copied from his own writing :

“ Graciously accept our thanks, Thou Giver of all good, for having preserved us another night, and bestowed on us another day. O, grant that on this day, we may meditate on thy law with joyful veneration, and keep it, in all our actions, with firm obedience !”

Minute circumstances frequently tend to mark and develope character. As a farther instance of this observation, however trifling it may appear, the application, by sir William Jones to himself, of two lines of Milton, in his own writing, under a

card with his printed name, in addition to more substantial proofs, may be quoted in evidence of his habitual frame of mind :

Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth
With God, who call'd him to a land unknown.

On another scrap of paper, the following lines appear : they were written by him in India, but at what period is not known, nor indeed is of any consequence :

Sir EDWARD COKE.

Six hours in sleep, in law's grave study six,
Four spend in prayer,—the rest on nature fix :

RATHER,

Seven hours to law, to soothing slumber seven,
Ten to the world allot, and *all* to Heaven.

If we sometimes suffer the humiliation of seeing great talents and extensive erudition prostituted to infidelity, and employed in propagating misery, by endeavouring to subvert the basis of our temporal and eternal welfare ; we cannot but feel a more than common gratification, at the salutary union of true genius and piety. Learning, that wantons in irreligion, may, like the Sirius of Homer, flash its strong light upon us ; but though brilliant, it is baneful ; and, while it dazzles, makes us tremble for our safety. Science, therefore, without piety, whatever admiration it may excite, will never be

entitled to an equal degree of respect and esteem; with the humble knowledge which makes us wise unto salvation. The belief of sir William Jones in revelation, is openly and distinctly declared in his works : but the unostentatious effusions of sequestered adoration, whilst they prove the sincerity of his conviction, give an additional weight to his avowed opinions.

XCVIII

*To John Macpherson, Esq.**

March 12, 1785.

I ALWAYS thought, before I left England, that a regard for the public good required the most cordial union between the executive and judicial powers in this country ; and I lamented the mischief occasioned by former divisions. Since I have no view of happiness on this side of the grave, but in a faithful discharge of my duty, I shall spare no pains to preserve that cordiality which subsists, I trust, and will subsist, between the government and the judges.

Lord Bacon, if I remember right, advises every statesman to relieve his mind from the fatigues of business by a poem, or a prospect, or any thing that raises agreeable images : now, as your own gardens afford you the finest prospects, and I

* Afterwards sir John Macpherson, Bart.

should only offer you a view of paddy-fields,* I send you, for your amusement, what has amused me in the composition—a poem † on the old philosophy and religion of this country; and you may depend on its orthodoxy. The time approaches when I must leave these recreations, and return to my desk in court, where, however, a knowledge of the Hindu manners and prejudices may not be useless.

XCIX.

To John Macpherson, Esq.

May 17, 1785.

I HAVE so many things, my dear sir, to thank you for, that I scarcely know where to begin. To follow the order of time, I must, in the first place, give you my hearty thanks for your kind and pleasing letter of last week, which shows that your mind can grasp the whole field of literature and criticism, as well as that of politics; and that, in the manner of ancient rulers in Asia, particularly Cicero, the governor of Cilicia, you unite the character of the statesman and the scholar: next for the news, which has on the whole given me pleasure, and in

* Rice-fields.

† The Enchanted Fruit, or Hindu Wife. See his Works, vol. vi.

particular, what both pleases and surprises me, that lord Camden has accepted the post of president of the council. You know the opinion which I early formed of Pitt; and that opinion will be raised still higher, if he has shown himself (not merely indifferent, but) anxious that the reins of this government may long continue in the hands which now hold them; and which, though mortals, as Addison says, cannot command success, will certainly deserve it. I anxiously wish, for the sake of the public, that not only the operations of the law, but the cordial assent of those on whom it depends, have already secured your seat, as long as it may be consistent with your happiness to fill it.

* * * * *

I will not fail to talk with Mr. Chambers on the college; and beg you to assure yourself that I shall ever be happy, in my sphere, to give my humble assistance, whenever you may require it.

C.

To John Macpherson, Esq.

May 22, 1785.

It was my intention to present to you, in the author's name, the books which I now send. The poet Zainudeen was recommended to me soon after I came to India, as a worthy ingenious old man. I

enclose his verses to you, with a hasty translation, on the back of the paper, of the best couplets. The smaller volume contains part of the epic poem, which is written with enthusiasm; and the other volume is filled with odes and elegies, all in the old man's writing: he is married to immortal verse; and his highest ambition is, to be an atom in one of your sun beams.

CI.

To John Macpherson, Esq.

May, 1785.

THE ornament of the faith, (for that is the bard's name) Zainudeen, will wait upon you on Wednesday: his style of compliments is moderate, in comparison of most Oriental compositions; other poets of this country would have entreated you not to ride on horseback, lest you should cause an earthquake in India when you mounted. This was actually said to a prince at Delhi, who pleasantly bade the poet comfort himself; and assured him, that he would ever after go in a palanquin.

CII.

To John Macpherson, Esq.

May 26, 1785.

THE regulation which you made concerning the Madrissa,* is so salutary, that few things would grieve me more than to see it frustrated. Your predecessor has often mentioned to me, the high opinion which he had formed of the rector; but (I

* The passages in these letters relating to the Madrissa, or college, as an establishment of national importance, merits a more particular explanation. Mr. Hastings, whilst he held the office of governor-general, with a view to promote the knowledge of Mohammedan law, as essential to the due administration of justice to the natives of India, had established a college at Calcutta, in which native students were admitted and taught at the public expense. This institution was dictated by a wise policy: it was calculated to conciliate the affections of the Mussulmans, and to insure a succession of men properly qualified by education to expound the law of the Coran, and to fill the important offices of magistrates in the courts of justice. The president of this college had been selected with every attention to his character and ability; but, some representations having been made to his disadvantage, the succeeding governor-general, J. Macpherson, Esq. consulted sir William Jones, on the regulations proper to be established for promoting the laudable objects of the institution, and controlling its conduct.

know not for what reason) he is very unpopular.— Perhaps it is only faction, too common in most colleges at our universities, of the students against the head.

It is a remark of Johnson's,* that as spiders would make silk, if they could agree together; so men of letters would be useful to the public, if they were not perpetually at variance. Besides my approbation, as a good citizen, of your regulations, I have a particular interest in the conduct of Mujdudeen, who is Maulavy† of the court, and, as such, ought to be *omni exceptione major*: I believe, from my conversation with him, that he is not a man of deep learning; but his manners are not unpleasing. The proposal which you make, cannot but produce good effects; but I hardly know any member of our society, who answers your description for a visitor under your directions, except Mr. Chambers, and his report might be depended on. I will, if you please, propose it on Thursday. The students brought a complaint before me last term, which I dismissed, as not being within my cognizance, that their allowances were taken by the head, who left them without subsistence; but whether this be true or false, it will not be amiss for the Maulavy to know, that he is subject to visitation from time to time.

If the best intentions can insure safety, you have nothing to apprehend; but alas! my friend, if you can be safe only in fixed unanimous opinions of statute law, you can seldom, I fear, act with perfect

* Originally Resumur's.

† Expounder of the Mohammedan law.

confidence. Such is the imperfection of human language, that few written laws are free from ambiguity ; and it rarely happens that many minds are united in the same interpretation of them.

A statesman told lord Coke, that he meant to consult him on a point of law. " If it be common law," said Coke, " I should be ashamed if I could not give you a ready answer ; but if it be statute law, I should be equally ashamed if I answered you immediately."

I will here only set down a few rules of interpretation, which the wisdom of ages has established, where the sense of the words is at all ambiguous.

1. The intention of the writer must be sought, and prevail over the literal sense of terms ; but penal laws must be strictly expounded against offenders, and liberally against the offence.

2. All clauses, preceding or subsequent, must be taken together, to explain any one doubtful clause.

3. When a case is expressed to remove any doubt, whether it was included or not, the extent of the clause, with regard to cases not so expressed, is by no means restrained.

4. The conclusion of a phrase is not confined to the words immediately preceding, but usually extended to the whole antecedent phrase.

These are copious maxims, and, with half a dozen more, are the stars by which we steer in the construction of all public and private writings.

CIII.

To John Macpherson, Esq.

Court House, July.

WE have just convicted a low Hindu of a foul conspiracy, which would have ended in perjury, and (as his own law-giver says) in every cause of damnation. If richer men were of the plot, I hope our court will escape the reproach of the satirist, that "laws resemble cobwebs, which catch flies, and let the wasps break through."

CIV.

To John Macpherson, Esq.

August 14, 1785.

I GIVE you my hearty thanks, my dear sir, for the history of the Roman Republic, which I read with particular pleasure.

Looking over my shelves the other day, I laid my hand on the annexed little book, ascribed to sir

Walter Raleigh : it is, like most posthumous works, incorrect ; but contains, with some rubbish, a number of wise aphorisms and pertinent examples ; it is rather the common-place book of some statesman, than a well digested treatise ; but it has amused me on a second reading, and I hope it will amuse a few of your leisure moments.

CV.

To Dr. Patrick Russel.

Crishnagur, Sept. 8, 1785.

YOUR two kind letters found me overwhelmed with the business of a severe sessions and term, which lasted two months, and fatigued me so much, that I was forced to hasten from Calcutta as fast as winds and oars could carry me. I am now at the ancient university of Nadeya, where I hope to learn the rudiments of that venerable and interesting language, which was once vernacular in all India, and in both the peninsulas with their islands. Your pursuits must be delightful, and I shall be impatient to see the fruit of your learned labours. Our society goes on slowly ; and hot-bed fruits are not so good to my taste as those which ripen naturally.

• • • • •

Dr. Koenig's loss will be severely felt ; he was a

valuable man, with as much simplicity as nature herself, whose works he studied. Do you know when his books are to be disposed of? I should wish to purchase his Linnæus.

CVI.

To Charles Chapman, Esq.

Crishnagur, Sept. 28, 1785.

I AM proceeding slowly, but surely, in this retired place, in the study of Sanscrit ; for I can no longer bear to be at the mercy of our pundits, who deal out Hindu law as they please, and make it at reasonable rates, when they cannot find it ready made. I annex the form adopted by us for the oaths of Mussulmans : you will, in your discretion, adopt or reject it ; and if you can collect from Mahesa pundit, who seemed a worthy honest man, how Hindu witnesses ought to be examined, and whether the Brahmins can give absolution (I think they call it *pryarchitt*) for perjury, and in what case, you will greatly oblige me, and contribute to the advancement of justice.

CVII.

To John Macpherson, Esq.

Calcutta.

• • • • •

LADY Jones and myself received much benefit from the dry soil and pure air of Crishnagur : how long my health will continue in this town, with constant attendance in court every morning, and the irksome business of justice of peace in the afternoon, I cannot foresee. If temperance and composure of mind will avail, I shall be well ; but I would rather be a valetudinarian all my life, than leave unexplored the Sanscrit mine which I have just opened.

I have brought with me the father of the university of Nadeya, who, though not a Brahmin, has taught grammar and ethics to the most learned Brahmins, and has no priestly pride, with which his pupils, in general, abound.

CVIII.

To Sir John Macpherson, Bart.

MY DEAR SIR, Phoenix Sloop, Feb. 5, 1786.

HAD I known where Captain Light* lived in Calcutta, I would not have troubled you with the annexed letter; but I must request you to forward it to him: it is an answer to an excellent letter from him, which I received near a twelvemonth ago. I anxiously hope he has completed (what no other European could begin) a version of the Siamese code.

My voyage to the eastern coast, will, I trust, be very pleasant, and I hope we shall make our part good against the scoundrel Peguers; though, if we descry a fleet of boats, I believe it will be wiser to retreat on the wings of the Phoenix; for I am not poet enough to believe, that another will rise from her ashes.

I lament that our respective engagements have prevented our meeting often, since the end of the rains; but six or seven hours in the morning, and two or three in the evening, spent in unremitted labour, for the last three months, fatigued me so

* Captain Light was appointed superintendent of a new settlement at Penang, or Prince of Wales's Island.

much, that I had no leisure for society—scarcely any for natural repose. My last act was to sign our letter to your board on the subject of our salaries ; and I would have called upon you, to expostulate amicably on the measure you had pursued, if I had not wished to spare you the pain of defending indefensible steps, and the difficulty of finding reasons to support the most unreasonable conduct. Many passages in the letter were softened by my brethren ; for I, who have long been habituated to ancient simplicity, am ever inclined both to write and speak as I think or feel ; and I should certainly have asked, if we had conversed on this matter, whether distressing and pinching the judges, and making them contemptible in the eyes of the natives and of their own servants, was, as you expressed yourself last summer, assisting them with heart and hand ; or whether forming resolutions, as the sub-treasurer wrote me word three weeks ago concerning them, of which they were the last men in the settlement to hear, was intended as a return for that perfect cordiality, as far as honesty permitted, which I had assured you and Mr. Stables, to be one of the golden rules which I had early resolved to pursue in my judicial character.

In a word, the measure is so totally indefensible, that it would have given me as much pain as yourself, to have discussed it. I have marked the progress of this business from the morning when I received Mr. M.'s note ; and I am well persuaded, that the invasion of our property was not an idea conceived or approved by you, but forced on you by some financier, who was himself deluded by a conceit of impartiality ; not considering that the

cases were by no means parallel : under this persuasion, I beg you to believe, that the measure has not yet made any change in the sincere esteem, with which I am, dear sir,

Your faithful humble servant,

WILLIAM JONES.

CIX.

To Thomas Caldicott, Esq.

Chatigan, Feb. 21, 1786.

I HAVE been so loaded with business, that I deferred writing to you till it was too late to write much ; and when the term ended, was obliged, for the sake of my wife's health and my own, to spend a few weeks in this Indian Montpelier, where the hillocks are covered with pepper vines, and sparkle with the blossoms of the coffee tree : but the description of the place would fill a volume, and I can only write a short letter to say, *si vales, bene est : valeo.*

CX.

To George Hardinge, Esq.

Feb. 22, 1786.

A WORD to you ; no ! though you have more of wisdom (*et verbum sapienti*, &c.) than I have, or wish to have of popularity, yet I would not send you one word, but millions and trillions of words, if I were not obliged to reserve them for conversation. The immeasurable field that lies before me, in the study of Sanscrit and of Hindu jurisprudence (the Arabic laws are familiar to me), compels me, for the present, to suspend my intention of corresponding regularly with those I love.

CXI.

To Sir John Macpherson, Bart.

Jafferabad, Feb. 27, 1786.

I CANNOT express, my dear sir, the pleasure which I have just received from that part of the board's letter to us, in which they set us right in our misconception of their preceding letter.

I rejoice that we were mistaken, and have just signed our reply : it will, I persuade myself, restore the harmony of our concert ; which, if worldly affairs have any analogy to music, will rather be improved than spoiled by a short dissonant interval. You, who are a musician, will feel the tone of this metaphor : as to my harsher notes, *quicquid asperius dictum est, indictum esto*. In fact, (you could not know it, but) I never had been so pinched in my life, as for the last three months ; having bought company's bonds, (which nothing but extreme necessity could have made me sell at 30 per cent. discount) I was unable to pay my physician, or my munshis ; and was forced to borrow, for the first time in my life, for my daily rice : what was worse, I was forced to borrow of a black man ; and it was like touching a snake or the South American eel : in short, if our apprehensions had been well-grounded, two of us had resolved to go home next season. But your letter dispersed all clouds, and made my mind as clear as the air of this fine climate, where I expect to escape the heats, and all the ills they produce in a constitution like mine. I confess, I wish you had accepted our offer ; for half my salary is enough for me, and I would have received the remainder cheerfully on any terms, as I have hitherto done : but as it is, we are all satisfied ; and your offers were so equal, that either would have been satisfactory to me.

You must know better than I can, though I am so much nearer the place on the frontiers where Major Ellerker is now encamped. I can hardly

persuade myself that Myuu Gachim Fera,* with all his bravery in words, will venture to pass the Nâf: the whole story is curious; and as I am on the spot, I wish to write it with all the gravity of an historian, especially as I can pick out some part of the Pegu general's original letter, the characters of which are little more than the *nagari* letters inverted and rounded.

I now sit opposite to the seas, which wafted na gently hither in the Phoenix; and our voyage was well-timed; for, had we stayed two days longer, we should have been in a north-wester. A beautiful vale lies between the hillock on which the house is built, and the beach: on all the other sides are hills finely diversified with groves; the walks are scented with blossoms of the *champao*† and *nagasar*;‡ and the plantations of pepper and coffee are equally new and pleasing. My wife, who desires her best remembrance, amuses herself with drawing, and I with botany. If, (which I trust will not be the case) you should be indisposed, this is the Montpelier which will restore you to health.

* A general in the service of the king of Ava, who appeared on the frontiers of Chatigan with an army. The Nâf is the boundary river between Chatigan and Aracan.

† *Michelia champaca*, of Linnæus.

‡ *Mesua ferrea*, of Linnæus.

CXII.

To Mr. Justice Hyde.

Jafferabad, April 30, 1786.

I DELAYED, my dear sir, to answer your kind letter of the 10th, until I could give you an accurate account of my motions towards Calcutta. We shall not stay here a whole week longer, but proceed, as soon as we can make preparations for our journey, to the burning well,* and thence through Tipera to

* This well is situated about twenty-two miles from Chagtigan : its shape is oblong : it measures about six feet by four ; and is twelve feet in depth. The water, which is always cold, is supplied by a spring ; and there is a conduit for carrying off the superfluity. A part of the surface of the well, about a fourth, is covered with brick-work, which is nearly ignited by the flames, which flash, without intermission, from the surface of the water. It would appear that an inflammable vapour escapes through the water, which takes fire on contact with the external air ; the perpetuity of the flame is occasioned by the ignited brick-work ; as, without this, much of the vapour would escape without conflagration. This was proved by taking away the covering of brick-work after the extinction of the heat, by throwing upon it the water of the well : the flames still continued to burst forth from the surface, but with momentary intermissions ; and the vapour was always immediately kindled, by holding a candle at a small distance from the surface of the water. A

Dacca: an old engagement will oblige us to deviate a little out of our way to Comarcaly; and if the Jellingy be navigable, we shall soon be in Calcutta; if not, we must pass a second time through the Sundarbans: in all events, nothing, I think, can hinder my being in court on the 15th of June. Suffer me now to thank you, as I do most heartily, for the very useful information which you give me concerning money matters. The ancients said (not very properly), of their imaginary gods, "carior est Divis homo quam sibi;" but I may truly say, "carior est amicis quam sibi," speaking of myself, and of your friendly attentions to me.

CXIII.

To Sir John Macpherson, Bart.

May 6, 1786.

I DELAYED, from day to day, and from week to week, the pleasure of answering your acceptable letter, which I received, I am afraid, so long ago

piece of silver, placed in the conduit for carrying off the superfluous water, was discoloured in a few minutes, and an infusion of tea gave a dark tinge to the water.

On the side of a hill, distant about three miles from the burning well, there is a spot of ground of a few feet only in dimensions, from which flashes of fire burst, on stamping strongly with the foot. The appearance of this spot resembles that of earth, on which a fire has been kindled.

as the middle of March : I wished to send you something interesting ; but my days flowed on in the same equable and uniform tenor, and were only to be distinguished by the advances I made in my Persian, Indian, and botanical pursuits. In short, as it sometimes happens, by intending to write much, I had written nothing ; and was preparing to give you some account of my motions towards the presidency, when I had the very great satisfaction of receiving your packet full of matter, full of pleasing accounts, and full of just observations. * * * * *

I read with pleasure, while I was at breakfast, Mr. Forster's lively little tract ; and having finished my daily task of Persian reading with a learned parsi of Yezd, who accompanied me hither, I allot the rest of the morning to you.

The approbation given at home to your seasonable exertions here, was but natural ; it could not have been otherwise, and therefore it gives me great pleasure, but no surprise. Be assured, that general applause ever has resulted, and ever will result, from good actions and salutary measures, as certainly as an echo, in rocky places, follows the voice. You will readily believe me, when I assure you, that I have few things more at heart than that you may enjoy as much as you can desire of that echo, and receive no pain or injury from the rocks ; for rocks abound, my friend, in the sea of life.

The Scripture speaks of nations overturning their *judges in stony places* ; and ambitious judges ought to be overturned : but as I do not aspire, I can never fall from an eminence.

The state of parties in England still makes me rejoice, that I am not in London : my friendships would lead me naturally to wish the rise of the * * * * * while my conscience, and my humble judgment oblige me to prefer system, as far as I know it. God grant he may adopt the best measures for this country, and give them effect by the best means, without disarranging your measures; since the wheel of continual changes cannot but have a bad effect in the minds of the governed :—but I sat down to write a letter, not a treatise.

By the way, I have read a second time here your friend's Treatise on the History of Civil Society, and am extremely pleased with it, especially his chapter on the relaxation of national spirit.

* * * * *

Your communications about the Lama will be truly interesting. I have read, since I left Calcutta, 800 pages in quarto, concerning the Mythology and History, both civil and natural, of Tibet : the work was printed with every advantage of new types and curious engravings at Rome, about ten years ago, and was compiled from the papers of an Italian father, named Orazio, who had lived thirty years in that country and Napal, where he died. On my return, I purpose, with the permission of the society, to send a treatise* to the press, which ought to stand first in our collections, as it will be a key to many other papers. I have caused six or seven plates to be engraved for it.

* A Dissertation on the Orthography of Asiatic Words, in Roman Letters.—See Sir W. Jones's Works, vol. I.

Always excepting my own imperfect essays, I may venture to foretell, that the learned in Europe will not be disappointed by our first volume. But my great object, at which I have long been labouring, is to give our country a complete digest of Hindu and Mussulman law. I have enabled myself, by excessive care, to read the oldest Sanscrit law-books, with the help of a loose Persian paraphrase; and I have begun a translation of Menu into English; the best Arabian law-tract I translated last year. What I can possibly perform alone, I will, by God's blessing, perform; and I would write on the subject to the minister, chancellor, the board of control, and the directors, if I were not apprehensive that they who know the world, but do not fully know me, would think that I expected some advantage either of fame or patronage, by purposing to be made the Justinian of India; whereas I am conscious of desiring no advantage, but the pleasure of doing general good. I shall consequently proceed in the work by my own strength, and will print my digest by degrees at my own expense, giving copies of it where I know they will be useful. One point I have already attained: I made the pundit of our court read and correct a copy of Halhed's* book in the original Sanscrit, and I then obliged him to attest it as good law; so that he never now can give corrupt opinions, without certain detection.

May your commercial blossom arrive at maturity with all the vigour of Indian vegetation!

* A translation by N. B. Halhed, esq. of the code compiled by pundits, by the direction of Mr. Hastings.

My soul expands, like your blossom, at the idea of improved commerce : no subject is to me more animating.

I have a commercial idea for you, not a blossom, but as yet a germ only. What if Persia should now flourish ! and what if the present king, Jaffier Khau, be really as great a man as represented ! Persia wants many manufactures of India, and her king would be a valuable ally. * * *

* * * I have already thanked you for your kind attentions to Emin, and I beg to repeat them : many in England will be equally thankful. He is a fine fellow ; and if active service should be required, he would seek nothing so much, as to be placed in the most perilous edge of the battle.*

* In this letter, we see the unabated activity of a vigorous mind, uniting recreation with improvement, and collecting, in its progress through the gardens of literature, the flowers of every soil. A detailed account of the daily studies of sir William Jones would surprise the most indefatigable ; and it may not be impertinent to mention, in proof of this observation, that he found time, during his short residence at Chatigan, in addition to the occupations which he has described, to peruse twice the heroic poem of Ferdosi, the Homer of Persia, supposed to contain sixty thousand couplets,

Few persons have passed through a greater variety of hardships and perilous adventures, than the person mentioned by sir William Jones under the name of Emin.—Born at Hamadan, in Persia, of Armenian parents, and exposed during his infancy to uncommon disasters ; while a mere youth, he followed his father and ruined family to Calcutta : he had there an opportunity of observing the superiority of Europeans, in arms, arts, and sciences, over the Asiatics ; and the impression which he received from it, inspired an invincible desire in Emin to acquire the know-

CXIV.

To Mr. Justice Hyde.

Comarcaly, June 15, 1786.

I FIND that, in this county, travellers are perfect slaves to the seasons and elements. It was my resolution, when I left Dacca, to push on as expeditiously as possible to Calcutta; but, in our passage of eight days, last year, through the Tulsi creek, and the Artai river, our boat was hotter, day and night, than ever I felt a vapour-bath: till then, as much as I had reason to dread an Indian

ledge which they possessed. For this purpose, he determined, at all hazards, to visit England; and, after a long opposition from his father, having obtained his reluctant assent, he adopted the only means left for the accomplishment of his purpose—by working his passage as a common sailor in one of the ships belonging to the East-India Company. After his arrival in England, he lost no time in beginning to acquire the instruction which he so anxiously desired; but his progress was retarded by the narrowness of his circumstances, and he was compelled to submit to menial occupations, and laborious employments, to procure a subsistence. In a moment of despair, he was accidentally introduced to the notice of the duke of Northumberland, and afterwards to that of many gentlemen of rank and fortune, by whose assistance his views were promoted.

sun, I had not a complete idea of it. This affected both lady Jones and myself so much, that it would have been madness to have passed the Sundarbaus in such weather; and Mr. Redfearn having promised to send me word when the Jelunga becomes navigable, (which is usually about the middle of this month) I expect every day to receive that intelligence; after which, I shall be in Calcutta in eight days. I am principally vexed at this delay, because, from your having taken the charge when it was sir R. Chambers's turn, I fear he must be ill; and consequently that you must have a great deal of trouble. Give my affectionate remembrance to him.

I am, &c.

CXV.

To Miss E. Shipley.

On the Ganges, Sept. 7, 1786.

You do too much honour, my dear madam, to my compositions: they amuse me in the few hours of leisure that my business allows; and if they amuse my friends, I am amply rewarded.

Ma sì 'l Latino e 'l Greco
 Parlan di me dopo la morte, è un vento;
 Ond' io, perchè pavento
 Adunar sempre quel ch' un' ora sgombre,
 Vorrei 'l vero abbracciar lassando l' ombra.

We talk of the year 1790, as the happy limit of our residence in this unpropitious climate; but this must be a family secret, lest applications should be made for my place, and I should be shoved out before my resignation. God grant, that the bad state of my Anna's health may not compel her to leave India before me! I should remain like a man with a dead palsy on one of his sides: but it were better to lose one side for a time, than both for ever. I do not mean that she has been, or is likely to be, in danger from her complaints: I have proposed a visit to her friend lady Campbell, and she seemed to receive the proposal with pleasure; the sea air, and change of scene, at a proper season, may do more than all the faculty, with all their prescriptions.—As to politics and ministers, let me whisper another secret in your ear:—

In non credo più al *nero* ch' all' *azzurro* :—

and, as to coalitions, if the *nero* be mixed with the *azzurro*, they will only make a dirtier colour. India is yet secure, and improveable beyond imagination: it is not, however, in such a state of security, but that wise politicians may, with strong well-timed exertions, and well-applied address, contrive to lose it. The discharge of my duty, and the study of Indian laws in their original languages, (which is no inconsiderable part of my duty) are an excuse for my neglect of writing letters; and indeed I find by experience, that I can take up my pen for that purpose but once a year, and I have a hundred unanswered letters now lying before me; but my Anna, who is my secretary

of state, and first, or rather *sole* lady of the treasury, has written volumes. Loves and regards to all who love and regard us: as to compliments, they are unmeaning things, and neither become me to send, nor you to convey.

I am, with great regard, dear madam, your faithful and affectionate servant,

WILLIAM JONES.

CXVI.

To Dr. Patrick Russel.

Crishna-nagur, Sept. 28, 1786.

VARIOUS causes contribute to render me a bad correspondent; particularly the discharge of my public duty, and the studies which are connected with that duty, such as the Indian and Arabic laws in their several difficult languages, one of which has occupied most of my leisure for the last twelvemonth, excepting when I travelled to Islamabad, for the benefit of the sea-air and verdant hillocks, during the hot season. It is only in such a retirement as the cottage, where I am passing a short vacation, that I can write to literary friends, or even think much on literary subjects; and it was long after I left this solitude last autumn, that I had the pleasure of receiving your most agreeable letter.

I am tolerably strong in Sanscrit; and hope to prove my strength soon by translating a law-tract of great intrinsic merit, and extremely curious, which the Hindus believe to be almost as old as the creation : it is ascribed to Menu, the Minos of India, and, like him, the son of Jove. My present study is the original of Bidpa's fables, called *Hitopadesa*,* which is a charming book, and wonderfully useful to a learner of the language. I congratulate you on the completion of your two works, but exhort you to publish them. Think how much fame Kœnig lost by delaying his publications. God knows whether any use, honourable to his memory, will be made of his manuscripts. Think of Mr. D'Herbelot, whose posthumous work, like most others, had the fate of being incorrectly published. Printing is dear at Calcutta; but if government would print your works, (as they ought) I could cheerfully superintend commas and colons. I am delighted with your botanical pursuits. They talk of a public garden on the banks of the river, near Calcutta. How I wish, for our sakes, you could be allured from the Sircars! I long to visit them, however, and to view your collections; though I must be so honest as to own, that *accurate* botanical descriptions give me more pleasure than an herbal, I mean where the fresh plants can be examined. For this reason, I have not begun to collect specimens, but describe as well as I can; and for brevity, in coarse Latin. Lady Jones assists me by her accuracy in drawing and colouring.

* Translated by sir W. Jones, and published in his works.

The province of Chatigan (vulgarly Chitigong) is a noble field for a naturalist. It is so called, I believe, from the chatag, which is the most beautiful little bird I ever saw. The hills and woods abound with uncommon plants and animals; indeed, the whole Eastern peninsula would be a new world to a philosopher. I wish poor Kœnig had left his papers to you: Banks has too much of his own to employ him; and Macpherson, who loved the sage, would, I dare say, have persuaded lord Cornwallis to raise the best monument to his memory—a good edition of his works. I have carefully examined a plant, which Kœnig mentioned to me, and called *pentapethès protea*, from the singular variety of leaves on the same tree: the natives call it *maschamchand*; and one of its fragrant fleshy blossoms, infused for a night in a glass of water, forms a mucilage of a very cooling quality. The *pentapethès phœnicia*, which now beautifies this plain, produces a similar mucilage, which might answer the same purposes as that of the Arabian gum, if not other and more important purposes. But I mention this plant, because Kœnig told me, that Linnæus had inverted nature in his description of it, by assigning to it five castrated filaments, to each of which were annexed three prolific ones; whereas, said he (I am sure I did not mistake him), the flower has fifteen castrated, and five prolific; so that in truth it would have been *pentandrian*. Now I have examined all the flowers of this species that I could get, and I find the description of Linnæus to be correct; but there is no accounting for the variety of a protean plant.

Many thanks for your offer of M. D'Hancar-

ville ; but I have the book, though, like you, I have not read it : I wish to be firm in Sanscrit, before I read systems of mythology. We have sent the first papers of our Transactions to the press, and shall go on as fast as Mr. G.'s compositor will let us. Farewell, my dear sir. *Vivere, valere, et philosophari cum paucis*, is what I wish for you, as much as for your, &c.

CXVII.

*To William Shipley, Esq.**

Crishna-nagur, Oct. 5, 1786.

I BLUSH, my dear sir, in reading, a second or third time, with increasing delight, your excellent letters from Maidstone, when I compare the dates of them

* Brother to the late bishop of St. Asaph, and now in his eighty-ninth year. This gentleman suggested the idea of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Commerce, &c. which was established in 1753 ; and, in the following year, a gold medal was voted to him by the Society, with an inscription :—

TO WILLIAM SHIPLEY,
whose public spirit
gave rise to this
SOCIETY.

with that of my answer. Various, however, are the causes which oblige me to be an indifferent and slow correspondent : first, illness, which had confined me three months to my couch, where your first letter found me on the great river ; next, the discharge of an important duty, which falls peculiarly heavy on the Indian judges, who are forced to act as justices of the peace in a populous country, where the police is deplorably bad ; then, the difficult study of Hindu and Mohammedan laws, in two copious languages, Sanscrit and Arabic—which studies are inseparably connected with my public duty, and may tend to establish, by degrees, among ten millions of our black subjects, that security of descendable property, a want of which, as you justly observe, has prevented the people of Asia from improving their agriculture and mechanical arts : lastly, I may add, (though rather an amusement than a duty) my pursuit of general literature, which I have here an opportunity of doing, from the fountain head—an opportunity which, if lost, may never be recovered. When I accept, therefore, with gratitude, the honour offered me by your young Hercules, the Maidstone Society, of being one of their corresponding members, I cannot indulge a hope of being a diligent or useful correspondent, unless any discovery should be made by our Indian Society, which I may think likely to be of use in our common country. Your various papers I have distributed among those who seemed the likeliest to avail themselves of the rules and hints which they contain. The rapidity of the Ganges makes it extremely difficult to rescue the unhappy persons who are overset in boats,

especially at the time of the *bore*,* when such accidents most usually happen; but I am confident that the methods prescribed in the little work which you sent me, will often be salutary, even here. Dr. Johnson's tract I have now lent to a medical friend of great ability; and I am particularly interested in the security of our prisons from infection, to which indeed they are less liable in this climate, from our practice of sleeping in a draught of air whenever it can be had. Without this habit, to which I am now inured, we should never be free from putrid disorders.

* * * *

Should your society be so extended as to admit all Kent, you will, I trust, have an excellent member in one of my oldest college friends, Dr. Breton, of Broughton, near Ashford, who has left no path of science or literature unexplored. We shall print our Transactions with all speed, consistent with accuracy; but as all our members, including even our printer, are men of business, in commerce, revenue, or judicature, we cannot proceed very rapidly, either in giving the public the tracts we have already collected, or in adding to our collection.

* The *bore* is an expression applied to a peculiar swell in the Houghli river, occasioned by the rapid influx of the tide.

CXVIII.

To Sir John Macpherson, Bart.

Calcutta, Nov. 1786.

THE society heard, with pleasure, the curious account of the lama's inauguration ; and the first sheet of their 'Transactions is printed.

* * * *

Be assured, that I will ever remember the contents of your own letter ; and accept my thanks, for the pleasure which I have received from that of Mr. Adam Ferguson to you : one sentence of it is so wise, and so well expressed, that I read it till I had it by heart : " Justice to the stranger," &c.

I am correcting proofs of our 'Transactions, which will, I hope, satisfy Mr. Ferguson as to the theology of the Hindus. By rising before the sun, I allot an hour every day to Sanscrit, and am charmed with knowing so beautiful a sister of Latin and Greek.

* * * *

Magnum vectigal est parcimonia, is an aphorism which I learned early from Cicero. The public, if

they are grateful, must wish that you had attended as vigilantly to your own vectigal, as you have wisely and successfully to theirs.

CXIX.

*To J. Shore, Esq.**

Gardens, near Calcutta, March 25, 1787.

I AM charmed, my dear sir, with the short but comprehensive work of Rhadacaunt, your pundit, the title of which I see is Purān-arthupracusam, or the meaning of the Purans displayed : it contains pedigrees, or lists of kings, from the earliest times to the decline of the Indian empire ; but the proper names are so murdered, or so strangely disguised in Persian letters, that I am only tantalized with a thirst for more accurate information. If the pundit, at your request, will lend me the original, my *Marhatta* writer shall copy it elegantly, with spaces between the lines for a literal English translation, which may perhaps be agreeable, with your consent, to our Society.

* The present lord Teignmouth, author of the *Memoirs of sir William Jones*.

CXX.

To J. Shore, Esq.

May 11, 1787.

I RETURN, with many thanks, my dear sir, the letter of his high mightiness Tatbu Arnu (king of Ava). When I began it, I feared it was hostile, but am glad to find it so amicable. *Dulce mihi nomen pacis!* If he is at peace with the Siamese, he may be a good neighbour, and we may be gainers by his gold and ivory: but I have no inclination to taste his sweet and delicious petroleum, which he praises so highly: I am satisfied with the smell of it, and with its singular property of restoring the scent of Russia leather.* I am told he is an able man; but from all I can learn, I suspect him to be an ambitious dog, who would act the lion if he could, and end, as he is said to have begun, the Aurenzeb of the Indian peninsula.

We are pretty well, and hope that you are now

* The letter of the king of Ava contains the following passage: "As there is an oil, the produce of a certain spot of the earth, of exquisite flavour, so is my dignity and power above that of other rajahs." The wells which produce this oil are in the vicinity of Rangoon, and have long been celebrated: their annual produce is estimated at 400,000 hogaheds.

in good health. You will not (though you dislike medicine) object to my prescription :

Take a concerto of Corelli,
—— an air of Leo, or Pergolesi,
—— a trio of Haydn, &c.—Mixture fiat.

Would I could be as good a physician to you, as I am, &c.

CXXI.

To J. Shore, Esq.

May 12, 1787.

You have sent me a treasure, which will enable me to satisfy my mind at least on the chronology of India: need I say, that I shall ever be happy in the conversation of so learned a man as Rhadacaunt? Before I return to Calcutta, I shall have read his interesting book, and shall be better able to converse with him in Sanscrit, which I speak continually with my pundit.

I can easily conceive all your feelings; but consider, my dear friend, that you are now collecting for yourself (while you serve your country) those flowers which will give a brighter bloom even to the valleys of Devonshire; that you are young, and have as fair a prospect of long happiness as any mortal can have. I predict, that when I meet you

a few years hence at Teignmouth, where I hope to spend many a season with all that my soul cherishes in this world, I shall hear you confess, that your painful toil in India conduced in the end to your happiness. That you may enjoy as much of it as human life affords, is the sincere wish of, &c.

CXXII.

To J. Shore, Esq.

June 24.

* * * * *

* I am well, rising constantly between three and four, and usually walking two or three miles before sun-rise; my wife is tolerably well; and we only lament, that the damp weather will soon oblige us to leave our herds and flocks, and all our rural delights on the banks of the Baghiratti. The business of the court will continue at least two months longer, after which I purpose to take a house at Bandell or Hughli, and pass my autumnal vacation, as usual, with the Hindu bards. I have read your pundit's curious book twice in Sanscrit, and will have it elegantly copied; the *Dabistan* also I have read through twice with great attention; and both copies are ready to be returned, as you

shall direct.* Mr. R. Johnston thinks he has a young friend who will translate the *Dabistan*; and the greatest part of it would be very interesting to a curious reader; but some of it cannot be translated. It contains more recondite learning, more entertaining history, more beautiful specimens of poetry, more ingenuity and wit, more indecency and blasphemy, than I ever saw collected in a single volume: the two last are not the author's, but are introduced in the chapters on the heretics and infidels of India. On the whole, it is the most amusing and instructive book I ever read in Persian.

I hear nothing from Europe, but what all the papers contain; and that is enough to make me rejoice exceedingly, that I am in Asia. Those with whom I have spent some of my happiest hours, and hope to spend many more on my return to England, are tearing one another to pieces, with the enmity, that is proverbial here, of the snake and the ichneumon. I have nothing left, therefore, but to wish what is right and just may prevail, to discharge my public duties with unremitting attention, and to recreate myself at leisure with the literature of this interesting country.

* The *Dabistan* is a treatise on twelve different religions, composed by a Mohammedan traveller, a native of Cashmir, named *Mohsan*, but distinguished by the assumed name of *Fani*, or *perishable*.

CXXIII.

To J. Shore, Esq.

Crishna-nagur, August 16, 1787.

I THANK you heartily, my dear sir, for the tender strains of the unfortunate Charlotte,* which have given us pleasure and pain : the sonnets which relate to herself, are incomparably the best. Petrarca is little known ; his sonnets, especially the first book, are the least valuable of his works, and contain less natural sentiments than those of the swan of Avon ; but his odes, which are political, are equal to the lyric poems of the Greeks ; and his triumphs are in a triumphant strain of sublimity and magnificence. Anna Maria gives you many thanks for the pleasure you have procured her. We are in love with this pastoral cottage ; but though these three months are called a vacation, yet I have no vacant hours. It rarely happens that favourite studies are closely connected with the strict discharge of our duty, as mine happily are : even in this cottage I am assisting the court by studying Arabic and Sanscrit, and have now rendered it an

* Sonnets by Charlotte Smith.

impossibility for the Mohammedan or Hindu lawyers to impose upon us with erroneous opinions.

This brings to my mind your honest pundit, Rhadacaunt, who refused, I hear, the office of pundit to the court, and told Mr. Hastings that he would not accept of it, if the salary were doubled: his scruples were probably religious; but they would put it out of my power to serve him, should the office again be vacant. His unvarnished tale I would have repeated to you, if we had not missed one another on the river; but since I despair of seeing you until my return to Calcutta, at the end of October, I will set it down here, as nearly as I can recollect, in his own words:

"My father," said he, "died at the age of an hundred years, and my mother, who was eighty years old, became a *sati*, and burned herself to expiate sins: they left me little besides good principles. Mr. Hastings purchased for me a piece of land, which at first yielded twelve hundred rupees a year; but lately, either through my inattention, or through accident, it has produced only one thousand. This would be sufficient for me and my family; but the duty of Brahmans is not only to teach the youths of their sect, but to relieve those who are poor. I made many presents to poor scholars and others in distress, and for this purpose I anticipated my income: I was then obliged to borrow for my family expenses; and I now owe about three thousand rupees. This debt is my only cause of uneasiness in this world. I would have mentioned it to Mr. Shore, but I was ashamed."

Now the question is, how he can be set upon his

legs again, when I hope he will be more prudent. If Bahman * should return to Persia, I can afford to give him one hundred rupees a month, till his debt shall be discharged out of his rents ; but, at present, I pay more in salaries to my native scholars than I can well afford: nevertheless, I will cheerfully join you in any mode of clearing the honest man, that can be suggested ; and I would assist him merely for his own sake, as I have more Brahmanical teachers than I can find time to hear.

I send you, not an elegant pathetic sonnet, but the wildest and strangest poem that was ever written—Khakani's complaint in prison. The whole is a menace, that he would change his religion, and seek protection among the Christians, or the Gabres. It contains one or two proper names, of which I find no full explanation even in a commentary professedly written to illustrate the poem.

The fire of Khakani's genius blazes through the smoke of his erudition : the measure of the poem, which will enable you to correct the errors of the copies, is,

	u	-	-	-		u	-	-	-		u	-	-	
	u	-	-	-		u	-	-	-		u	-	-	

with a strong accent on the last syllable of each foot. Adieu, my dear sir, &c.

* A parsi, and native of Yezd, employed by sir W. Jones as a reader.

CXXIV.

*To Jos. Couper Walker, Esq.**

Crishna-nagur, Sept. 11, 1787.

I GIVE you my hearty thanks, dear sir, for your kind attention to me, and for the pleasure which I have received from your letter, as well as for that which I certainly shall receive from your Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards. The Term being over before your book could be found, and the state of my health obliging me to seek this pastoral retreat, where I always pass my vacation among the Brahmans of this ancient university—I left Calcutta before I could read your work, but shall peruse it with eagerness on my return to the capital. You touched an important string, when you mentioned the subject of Indian music, of which I am particularly fond. I have just read a very old book on that art in Sanscrit: I hope to present the world with the substance of it, as soon as the Transactions of our Society can be printed: but we go on slowly, since the press is often engaged by government; and we think it better to let our fruit ripen naturally, than to bring forth such watery and imperfect fruits as

* Of Valeri, Bray, Ireland, author of Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards.

are usually raised in hot-beds. The Asiatic Miscellany, to which you allude, is not the publication of our Society, who mean to print no scraps, nor any mere translations: it was the undertaking of a private gentleman, and will certainly be of use in diffusing Oriental literature, though it has not been so correctly printed as I could wish. When you see colonel Vallancy, whose learned work I have read through twice with great pleasure, I request you to present him with my best remembrance. We shall soon, I hope, see faithful translations of Irish histories and poems: I shall be happy in comparing them with the Sanscrit, with which the ancient language of Ireland had certainly an affinity. Proceed, sir, in your laudable career: you deserve the applause of your country; and will most assuredly have that of, sir, &c.

CXXV.

To Dr. Patrick Russel.

Crishna-nagur, Sept. 22, 1787.

YOUR interesting papers did not find their way to me till I had left this cottage, and was wholly immersed in business. Indeed, I am so harassed for eight months in twelve, that I can seldom think of literature till the autumn vacation, which I pass in this charming plain, the driest

in Bengal, and close to a college of Brahmans. I am charmed with your plan; and if the directors have not yet resolved to print the work at their expense, I can perhaps suggest a mode of procuring very powerful influence with them. The king has much at heart his new botanical garden at St. Vincent's: his object is two-fold; to improve the commerce of the West-India islands, and to provide the British troops on service there with medicinal plants. Now, if you could send a box or two of seeds, likely to be useful in commerce or medicine, directed to sir George Young, the secretary at war (to whom I have enclosed your letter to the Board at Madras) I dare say the Board of Control would be desired to use their influence with the directors.

* * * * * You could not have chosen a better specimen than the *pedalium murex*, of which little is said by Linnæus, and that from doubtful authority. The *opuntia* I have not seen here, and I cannot ramble into the woods.—Our groves at this place are skirted with an angulated cactus, called *ajja* (pronounced *seeja*) in the Sanscrit dictionaries, where I find the names of about 300 medicinal plants, the virtues of which are mentioned in medicinal books. I agree with you, that those books do not carry full conviction; but they lead to useful experiments, and are therefore valuable. I made fine red ink, by dropping a solution of tin in *aqua regia* into an infusion of the *coccus*, which Dr. Anderson was so polite as to send to me. His discovery will, I trust, be useful; his ardour and ingenuity deserve success.

I have just read with attention the *Philosophia Botanica*, which I consider as the grammar,

and the *Genera et Species* as the dictionary, of botany : it is a masterly work, and contains excellent matter in a short volume ; but it is harshly, not to say barbarously, written. I grieve to see botany imperfect in its two most important articles, the natural orders and the virtues of plants, between which I suspect a strong affinity. I envy those who have leisure to pursue this bewitching study.

Pray, my dear sir, have you the Oriental manuscripts of my friend Dr. Alexander Russel ? He sent me three, which I returned : the *Sucardan*, the *Banquet of Physicians*, and a beautiful *Hafez*. If you have them, I shall beg leave to read them again, when we meet in Europe.

P.S. What is spikenard ? I mean botanically, what is the natural order, class, genus, &c. of the plant ? What was the spikenard in the alabaster-box of the Gospel ? What was *nardi parvus onyx* ? What did Ptolemy mean by the excellent nard of Rhangamutty in Bengal ? I have been in vain endeavouring, for above two years, to procure an answer to these questions : your answer will greatly oblige me.

CXXVI.

To Thomas Caldicott, Esq.

Crishna-nagur, Sept. 27, 1787.

YOUR brother sent me your letter at a convenient time, and to a convenient place ; for I can only write in the long vacation, which I generally spend in a delightful cottage, about as far from Calcutta as Oxford is from London, and close to an ancient university of Brahmans, with whom I now converse familiarly in Sanscrit. You would be astonished at the resemblance between that language and both Greek and Latin. Sanscrit and Arabic will enable me to do this country more essential service, than the introduction of arts, (even if I should be able to introduce them) by procuring an accurate digest of Hindu and Mohammedan laws, which the natives hold sacred, and by which both justice and policy require that they should be governed.

I have published nothing ; but Armenian clerks make such blunders, that I print ten or twenty copies of every thing I compose, which are to be considered as manuscripts. I beg you will send me your remarks on my plan of an epic poem. Sanscrit has engaged my vacations lately : but I will finish it, if I live. I promise you to attend to all that is said,

especially if alterations are suggested ; always reserving to myself the final judgment. One thing I am inflexible in : I have maturely considered the point, and am resolved to write in blank verse. I have not time to add my reasons ; but they are good.

I thank you for Sheridan's speech, which I could not however read through. For the last sixteen years of my life, I have been in a habit of requiring evidence of all assertions, and I have no leisure to examine proofs in a business so foreign to my pursuits. * * * * *

If Hastings and Impey are guilty, in God's name, let them be punished ; but let them not be condemned without legal evidence. I will say more of myself than you do of yourself, but in few words : I never was unhappy in England ; it was not in my nature to be so ; but I never was happy till I was settled in India. My constitution has overcome the climate ; and if I could say the same of my beloved wife, I should be the happiest of men : but she has perpetual complaints, and of course I am in perpetual anxiety on her account.

CXXVII.

To John Wilmot, Esq.

Crishna-nagur, Bengal, Oct. 3, 1787.

* * * * *
 * * * I cannot, however, let the season slip without scribbling a few lines to tell you, that my constitution seems to have overcome the climate, and that I should be as happy as mortal man can be, or at least ought to be, if my wife had been as well as I have for the last three years.

I have nothing to say of India politics, except that Lord Cornwallis and * * * are justly popular, and perhaps the most virtuous governors in the world. Of English politics I say nothing, because I doubt whether you and I should ever agree in them : I do not mean the narrow politics of contending parties, but the great principles of government and legislation, the majesty of the whole nation collectively, and the consistency of popular rights with regal prerogative, which ought to be supported, to suppress the oligarchical power. But in India I think little of these matters.

CXXVIII.

To J. Shore, Esq.

Crishna-nagur, Oct. 10, 1787.

I HOPE, in less than a fortnight, to see you in perfect health, as I shall leave this charming retreat on the 20th. I want but a few leaves of having read your copy of Hafez twice through ; and I am obliged to you for the most agreeable task (next the Shah-namē) I ever performed. The annexed elegy* was

* The elegy alluded to is the following :—

PHILEMON.—AN ELEGY.

Where shade yon yews the church-yard's lonely bourn,

With faltering step, absorb'd in thought profound,
Philemon wends in solitude to mourn,

While Evening pours her deepening glooms around.

Loud shrieks the blast ; the sleety torrent drives ;

Wide spreads the tempest's desolating power ;

To grief alone, Philemon reckless lives ;

No rolling peal he heeds, cold blast, nor shower.

For this the date that stamp'd his partner's doom ;

His trembling lips received her latest breath,

" Ah ! wilt thou drop one tear on Emma's tomb ?"

She cried ; and closed each wistful eye in death.

No sighs he breathed, for anguish rived his breast ;

Her clay-cold hand he grasp'd ; no tears he shed ;

Till fainting nature sunk, by grief oppress'd,

And ere distraction came, all sense was fled.

sent to me by the post ; and I send it to you, because I think you will like it. There is a great pathos in the fourth tetrastick ; and I know, unhappily, that excessive grief is neither full of tears, nor full of words ; yet if a dramatic poet were to represent such grief naturally, I doubt whether his conduct would be approved, though, with fine acting and fine sounds in the orchestra, it ought to have a wonderful effect. Lady J. is pretty well ; a tiger, about a month old, who is suckled by a goat, and has all the gentleness of his foster-mother, is now playing at her feet : I call him Jupiter.—Adieu.

CXXIX.

To Dr. Ford.

Gardens, on the Ganges, Jan. 5, 1788.

GIVE me leave to recommend to your kind attentions colonel Polier, who will deliver this to you at Oxford. He presents to the university an extremely rare work in Sanscrit, a copy of the four *vedas*, or Indian scriptures, which confirm, instead of opposing, the Mosaic account of the creation and of

Now time has calm'd, not cured, Philemon's woe ;
 For grief like his, life-woven, never dies ;
 And still each year's collected sorrows flow,
 As drooping o'er his Emma's tomb he sighs.

the deluge. He is himself one of the best-disposed and best-informed men, who ever left India. If he embark to-morrow, I shall not be able to send you, by him, an Arabic manuscript, which I have read with a native of Mecca, the poems of the great Ali.

* * * * *

Our return to Europe is very distant ; but I hope, before the end of the eighteenth century, to have the pleasure of conversing with you, and to give you a good account of Persia, through which I purpose to return.

CXXX.

To Sir Joseph Banks.

Gardens, near Calcutta, Feb. 25, 1788.

I WAS highly gratified by your kind letter, and have diffused great pleasure among our astronomers here, by showing them an account of the lunar volcano. The Brahmans, to whom I have related the discovery, in Sanscrit, are highly delighted with it. Public business presses on me so heavily at this season, that I must postpone the pleasure of writing fully to you, till I can retire in the long vacation to my cottage, where I hear nothing of plaintiffs or defendants. Your second commission I will faith-

fully execute, and have already made inquiries concerning the *dacca cotton*; but I shall be hardly able to procure the seeds, &c. before the Rodney sails.

* * * * *

CXXXI.

To Marquis Cornwallis, the Governor-General.

MY LORD,

It has long been my wish to address the government of the British dominions in India on the administration of justice among the natives of Bengal and Bahar; a subject of equal importance to the appellate jurisdiction of the supreme court at Calcutta, where the judges are required by the legislature to decide controversies between Hindu and Mohammedan parties, according to their respective laws of contracts, and of succession to property: they had, I believe, so decided them, in most cases, before the statute to which, I allude, had passed; and the parliament only confirmed that mode of decision, which the obvious principles of justice had led them before to adopt. Nothing indeed could be more obviously just, than to determine private contests according to those laws, which the parties themselves had ever considered as the rules of their conduct and engagements in civil life; nor could any thing be wiser, than, by a legislative act, to assure the Hindu and Mussulman subjects of

Great Britain, that the private laws which they severally held sacred, and a violation of which they would have thought the most grievous oppression, should not be superseded by a new system, of which they could have no knowledge, and which they must have considered as imposed on them by a spirit of rigour and intolerance.

So far the principle of decision between the native parties in a cause appears perfectly clear; but the difficulty lies (as in most other cases) in the application of the principle to practice; for the Hindu and Mussulman laws are locked up, for the most part, in two very difficult languages, Sanscrit and Arabic, which few Europeans will ever learn, because neither of them leads to any advantage in worldly pursuits: and if we give judgment only from the opinions of the native lawyers and scholars, we can never be sure that we have not been deceived by them.

It would be absurd and unjust to pass an indiscriminate censure on so considerable a body of men; but my experience justifies me in declaring, that I could not, with an easy conscience, concur in a decision, merely on the written opinion of native lawyers, in any cause in which they could have the remotest interest in misleading the court; nor, how vigilant soever we might be, would it be very difficult for them to mislead us; for a single obscure text, explained by themselves, might be quoted as express authority, though, perhaps, in the very book from which it was selected, it might be differently explained, or introduced only for the purpose of being exploded. The obvious remedy for this evil had occurred to me before I left England, where I had communicated my sentiments to some friends

in parliament, and on the bench in Westminster-hall, of whose discernment I had the highest opinion; and those sentiments I propose to unfold in this letter, with as much brevity as the magnitude of the subject will admit.

If we had a complete digest of Hindu and Moham-medan laws, after the model of Justinian's inestimable Pandects, compiled by the most learned of the native lawyers, with an accurate verbal translation of it into English; and if copies of the work were deposited in the proper offices of the Sedr Divani Adaulat,* and of the supreme court, that they might occasionally be consulted as a standard of justice—we should rarely be at a loss for principles at least, and rules of law applicable to the cases before us; and should never perhaps be led astray by the pundits or maulavis, who would hardly venture to impose on us, when their imposition might so easily be detected. The great work, of which Justinian has the credit, consists of texts collected from law books of approved authority, which in his time were extant at Rome; and those texts are digested according to a scientific analysis—the names of the original authors, and the titles of their several books, being constantly cited, with references even to the parts of their works from which the different passages were selected: but although it comprehends the whole system of jurisprudence, public, private, and criminal, yet that vast compilation was finished, we are told, in three years: it bears marks, unquestionably, of great precipitation, and of a desire to

* The court of appeals in civil suits.

gratify the emperor by quickness of dispatch ; but, with all its imperfections, it is a most valuable mine of judicial knowledge ; it gives law, at this hour, to the greatest part of Europe ; and, though few English lawyers dare make such an acknowledgment, it is the true source of nearly all our English laws, that are not of a feudal origin. It would not be unworthy of a British government, to give the natives of these Indian provinces a permanent security for the due administration of justice among them, similar to that which Justinian gave to his Greek and Roman subjects : but our compilation would require far less labour, and might be completed with far greater exactness, in as short a time, since it would be confined to the laws of contracts and inheritances, which are of the most extensive use in private life, and to which the legislature has limited the decisions of the supreme court, in causes between native parties : the labour of the work would also be greatly diminished by two compilations already made in Sanscrit and Arabic, which approach nearly, in merit and in method, to the digest of Justinian : the first was composed, a few centuries ago, by a Brahman of this province, named Raghu-nanden, and is comprised in twenty-seven books at least, on every branch of Hindu law : the second, which the Arabs called the Indian Decisions, is known here by the title of Fetaweh Aalemgiri, and was compiled by the order of Aurangzeb, in five large volumes, of which I possess a perfect and well-collated copy. To translate these immense works, would be superfluous labour ; but they will greatly facilitate the compilation of a digest on the laws of inheritance and contracts ; and the code, as it is

called, of Hindu law, which was compiled at the request of Mr. Hastings, will be useful for the same purpose, though it by no means obviates the difficulties before stated, nor supersedes the necessity or the expedience at least of a more ample repertory of Hindu laws, especially on the twelve different contracts to which Ulpian has given specific names; and on all the others, which, though not specifically named, are reducible to four general heads. The last-mentioned work is entitled *Vivadamavasetu*, and consists, like the Roman digests, of authentic texts, with the names of their several authors regularly prefixed to them, and explained, (where an explanation is requisite) in short notes, taken from commentaries of high authority: it is, as far as it goes, a very excellent work; but though it appear extremely diffuse on subjects rather curious than useful, and though the chapter on inheritances be copious and exact—yet the other important branch of jurisprudence, the law of contracts, is very succinctly and superficially discussed, and bears an inconsiderable proportion to the rest of the work. But whatever be the merit of the original, the translation of it has no authority, and is of no other use than to suggest inquiries on the many dark passages which we find in it: properly speaking, indeed, we cannot call it a translation; for though Mr. Halhed performed his part with fidelity, yet the Persian interpreter had supplied him only with a loose injudicious epitome of the original Sanscrit, in which abstract many essential passages are omitted; though several notes of little consequence are interpolated, from a vain idea of elucidating or improving the text. All this I say with confidence;

having already perused no small part of the original with a learned pundit, comparing it, as I proceeded, with the English version. Having shown, therefore, the expedience of a new compilation for each system of Indian law, I beg leave to state the difficulties which must attend the work, and to suggest the means of removing them.

The difficulty which first presents itself, is the expense of paying the pundits and maulavis who must compile the digest, and the native writers who must be employed to transcribe it. Since two provinces are immediately under this government, in each of which there are many customary laws, it would be proper to employ one pundit of Bengal and another from Bahar ; and since there are two Mohammedan sects, who differ in regard to many traditions from their prophet, and to some decisions of their respective doctors ; it might be thought equally proper to engage one maulavi of each sect : and this mode would have another advantage ; since two lawyers, conferring freely together on fundamental principles common to both, would assist, direct, and check each other.*

Although I can have no personal interest, immediate or consequential, in the work proposed, yet I would cheerfully have borne the whole expense of it, if common prudence had not restrained me, and if my private establishment of native readers and writers, which I cannot with convenience discontinue at present, did not require more than half of the monthly expense, which the completion of a

* A passage, relating to the remuneration of the natives to be employed, is here omitted.

digest would, in my opinion, demand : I am under a necessity, therefore, of intimating, that if the work be thought expedient, the charges of it should be defrayed by the government, and the salaries paid by their officers. The second difficulty is, to find a director of the work, and a translator of it, who, with a competent knowledge of the Sanscrit and Arabic, has a general acquaintance with the principles of jurisprudence, and a sufficient share even of legislative spirit, to arrange the plan of a digest, superintend the compilation of it, and render the whole, as it proceeds, into perspicuous English ; so that even the translation may acquire a degree of authority proportioned to the public opinion of his accuracy. Now, though I am truly conscious of possessing a very moderate portion of those talents which I should require in the superintendent of such a work ; yet I may, without vanity, profess myself equal to the labour of it ; and though I would much rather see the work well conducted by any man than myself, yet I would rather give myself the trouble of it, than not live to see it conducted at all ; and I cannot but know, that the qualifications required, even in the low degree in which I possess them, are not often found united in the same person, for a reason before suggested. If your lordship, therefore, after full consideration of the subject, shall be of opinion, that a digest of Hindu and Mohammedan laws would be a work of national honour and utility—I so cherish both, that I offer the nation my humble labour, as far as I can dispose of my time consistently with the faithful discharge of my duty as a magistrate. Should this offer be accepted, I should then request your lord-

ship to nominate the pundits and maulavis, to whom I would severally give a plan conformable to the best analysis that I could make; and I should be able, if my health continued firm, to translate every morning, before any other business is begun, as much as they could compile, and the writers copy, in the preceding day. The Dhermasastra, or sacred code of the Hindus, consists of eighteen books, the first of which would, in any age or nation, be thought a wonderful performance: both the first and second have excellent commentaries of great authority; but the others sixteen are too easy to need elucidation: the works of Menu, of Yagyawalcia, and most of the others, are in blank verse, but that of Gautam is in modulated prose: besides these, the Hindus have many standard law-tracts, with their several commentaries, and among them a fine treatise on inheritances by Jemutavahan, to which our pundits often refer; though, on that subject, the work of Raghunanden seems to be more generally approved in this province. The Mussulmans, besides a few general rules in the Coran, and a number of traditional maxims delivered from their prophet and his companions, through the sages of their law; together with the opinions of the celebrated lawyers, preserved by their disciples—have two incomparable little tracts; one by Surajuddin, and the other by Alkuduri; the former on succession only, and the other on contracts; also with comments on each, and other comments on them—not to mention some other tracts of acknowledged authority, and large collections of decision in particular cases. All these books may, I suppose, be procured with ease; and some of the most rare among

them are in my possession : mine I would lend, with pleasure, to the pundits and maulavis, if they happened to be unprovided with good copies of them ; and my example would, I persuade myself, be followed, on such an occasion, by other collectors of Eastern manuscripts, both natives and Europeans. This is all that appears necessary to be written on the subject, with which I began this address to your lordship : I could not have expressed myself more concisely without some obscurity ; and to have enlarged on the technical plan of the work which I have proposed, would have been superfluous.*

I have the honour to be, &c.

WILLIAM JONES.

Calcutta, March 19, 1788.

* A proposal, such as the letter of sir William Jones contains, could not fail of receiving that attention which it merited. The marquis Cornwallis directed an answer to be written to sir William Jones, expressive of his satisfaction concerning it, and stating, that he deemed it singularly fortunate, that a person, so eminently qualified for the task, should, from principles of general benevolence and public spirit, be induced to engage in an undertaking, as arduous as it was beneficial.

CXXXII.

To J. Shore, Esq.

Feb. 7, 1788.

I AVAIL myself of an hour's leisure, to throw upon paper a few thoughts on the subject of our late conference,* concerning an application to the legislature, for a power of *summary conviction and punishment* in Calcutta.

The concurrence or dissent of an individual, who is not a member of an executive government, ought to have so little weight, that I would not have obtruded my opinion, if it had not been asked ; but it would ill become me to concur in an application to parliament, for a power, the granting of which, if I were myself in parliament, I should hold it my duty to oppose.

The difficulty, of which we all seemed sensible, arises from a supposed necessity of deviating from the spirit and form of English judicature in criminal cases : yet the English form has been approved by the wisdom of a thousand years, and has been found effectual in the great cities of England,

* This was a conference between the executive government of Bengal and the judges, relative to the police at Calcutta, which wanted great reformation.

for the good order and government of the most high-minded, active, and restless people that exists on earth.

I could easily demonstrate, that the criminal code of our nation is fully sufficient to punish every temporal wrong, and redress every temporal evil, that can injure the public or individuals; and a British tribunal, for punishment of religious offences by Hindus or Mussulmans, would not only be an inquisition of the most extraordinary kind, but would, I am persuaded, be offensive in the beginning, and oppressive in the end, to the natives of both religions.

The question is then reduced to this—Is it absolutely necessary to convict and punish offenders in Calcutta without a jury? If it be, we must follow the example of Solon, who enacted such laws as were, though not the best in themselves, yet the best that circumstances would admit. I am not convinced that such a necessity exists, and strongly incline to think it does not. The evil to be remedied, is the small number of magistrates; the obvious remedy is, to appoint a greater number. If the legislature, therefore, would give the governor in council a power to appoint from six to twelve justices of the peace, those justices would (under the direction of government) appoint subordinate peace-officers, whose legal powers are very considerable, yet accurately defined; but a superintendent of the police is an officer unknown to our system, borrowed from a foreign system, or at least suggesting the idea of a foreign constitution; and his powers being dark and undefined, are those which our law most abhors. The justices would hold a session every quarter of a year, without

troubling the members of government, who have other avocations; so that in every year there would be six sessions for administering criminal justice: but then comes the great question, How could the juries be supplied, without injury to those who should sit on them? Now, without urging that some occasional trouble, and perhaps loss, are the fine which Englishmen pay for their freedom; without intimating, that, but a few years ago, an application to parliament was made, among other objects, for a trial by jury in all cases, even in Calcutta; without contending, that if summary convictions be once made palatable, we should gradually lose our relish for the admirable mode of trial, on which our common liberties at home almost wholly depend; without rambling a moment from the point before us—I conceive that three hundred persons, qualified to serve on petty juries, would be far more than sufficient to divide the trouble, with convenience to themselves, and benefit to the community.

On the whole, the annual burthen on each individual, especially if a kind of rotation were observed, or even if the chance of a ballot were taken, would be too inconsiderable to weigh a feather against the important object of supporting so excellent a mode of trial.

After all, are we sure that the British subjects in Calcutta would be better pleased than myself with any slur upon the constitutional trial by jury? and as to the natives, besides the policy of allowing them all the beneficial effects of our judicature, (and that a trial by twelve men, instead of one, with a power of exceptions, is a benefit, must be

granted by all) I rather think that the inhabitants of a British town, owing local allegiance, are entitled to the local advantage of being tried by a British form. In all events, if it be a benefit, they ought not to be deprived of it, without some greater public good to compensate the private injustice, than would result, I apprehend, from the power of summary conviction, if it were exercised by men, whose monthly gains would depend on the number of complaints made, and of fines levied.

I am confident, therefore, after mature deliberation, that nothing more is to be desired than a power in this government of appointing justices of peace by annual commissions; and these being my sentiments, I rely on your friendship, so long and so constantly manifested, that if it should be thought proper to mention the concurrence of the judges, you will remember that their concurrence was not unanimous.

I could easily have said all this and more; but I chose this mode, through delicacy, and fear of giving pain. Farewell; and as I esteem you, so esteem, dear sir, your ever affectionate, &c.

CXXXIII.

To J. Shore, Esq.

Gardens, 1788.

I THANK you heartily, my dear sir, for every part of your letter, and for your strings of Oriental gems—both for the *durr* and the *shebeh* :* the *pearls* appear with more lustre by the side of the *beads*.

Your quotations from the elegies of Washi are sweetly pathetic : but I will not detain your servant by more observations. Sacontala will hardly be finished before I go to my cottage : happy shall I be if your occupations allow you to pass a few days near it. Adieu.

CXXXIV.

To J. Shore, Esq.

Gardens, 1788.

THE verses are worthy of Catullus, and in his manner ; they would appear well in *hendecasyllables*.

* An Oriental expression for *prose and verse*.

I will think, at some leisure moment, of giving them a Persian dress, according to your hints. I rejoice that you have it in your power to relieve your mind by poetical imagery : it is the true use of the fine arts.

I have been reading cases for a judgment on Tuesday, from nine o'clock till past two.

Farewell.

CXXXV.

To Dr. Patrick Russel.

Crishna-nagur, Sept. 24, 1788.

I HAVE acted like those libertines, who defer repentance till the hour of death, and then find that they have not time to repent. Thus I deferred the pleasure of answering letters till the vacation ; but found the term and session so long, that I have scarcely any vacation at all : I must, therefore, write very laconically, thanking you heartily for your kind letters, and very curious papers in natural history, wishing that the public may soon gather the fruit of your learned labours.

The business of the court this year has left me no leisure to examine flowers at Crishna-nagur. The *sija* is never in blossom when I am here ; but though it has something of the form of the *cactus*,

yet I imagine, from the milk of it, that it is an *euphoria*.

With all my exertions, I cannot procure any fresh spikenard; but I will not desist. I have two native physicians in my family, but they have only seen it in a dry state.

I am very sorry to find that you are leaving us, as I have no chance of seeing Europe till the end of the eighteenth century. I wish you and your brother, and his family, a prosperous and speedy voyage. It is impossible for me to write more than, *Vive, vale!*

CXXXVI.

To Thomas Caldicott, Esq.

Sept. 24, 1788.

WE have had incessant labour for six hours a day, for three whole months, in the hot season between the tropics; and, what is a sad consequence of long sittings, we have scarcely any vacation: I can therefore only write to you a few lines this autumn. Before your brother sent me Lewiston Hill, I had read it twice aloud to different companies, with great delight to myself and to them: thank the author in my name. I believe his nameless rivulet is called *Bret*; or *Brit*, (whence *Bridport*) by Michael Drayton, who describes the fruitful Marshwood.

Pray assure all who care for me, or whom I am likely to care for, that I never, directly or indirectly, asked for the succession to sir E. Impey; and that, if any indiscreet friend of mine has asked for it in my name, the request was not made by my desire, and never would have been made with my assent.

“Co' magnanimi pochi, a chi 'l ben piace,”

I have enough; but if I had not, I think an ambitious judge a very dishonourable and mischievous character. Besides, I never would have opposed sir R. Chambers, who has been my friend twenty-five years, and wants money, which I do not.

I have fixed on the year 1800 for my return towards Europe, if I live so long; and hope to begin the new century auspiciously among my friends in England.

P. S. Since I wrote my letter, I have amused myself with composing the annexed ode to Abundance.* It took up ten or twelve hours to compose and copy it; but I must now leave poetry, and return, for ten months, to J. N. and J. S.

* See Sir W. Jones's Works, vol. vi.

CXXXVII.

To George Hardinge, Esq.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Sept. 24, 1788.

I AM the worst, and you the best correspondent; and I make but a pitiful return for your two kind letters, by assuring you, that I find it impossible to answer them fully this season. My eyes were always weak, and the glare of an Indian sky has not strengthened them; the little day-light I can therefore spare from my public duties, I must allot to studies connected with them; I mean the systems of Indian jurisprudence, and the two abstruse languages in which the Hindu and Mussulman laws are written. * * * *

Anna Maria is pretty well, and I am consequently happy: my own health is firm, and, excepting the state of hers, I have all the happiness a mortal ought to have.

CXXXVIII.

To W. Shipley, Esq.

Sept. 27, 1788.

• • • • • My
own health, by God's blessing, is firm, but my eyes are weak ; and I am so intent upon seeing the digest of Indian laws completed, that I devote my leisure almost entirely to that object: the natives are much pleased with the work ; but it is only a preliminary to the security which I hope to see established among our Asiatic subjects.

The business of our society is rather an amusement than a labour to me: they have, as yet, published nothing ; but have materials for two quarto volumes; and will, I hope, send one to Europe next spring. I lament the sad effects of party, or rather faction, in your Maidstone society, but hope (to use a word of Dr. Johnson), that it will redintegrate. Many thanks for the Transactions of your London Society, which I have lent to a very learned and ingenious friend, who is much pleased with them.

CXXXIX.

To J. Burnett, Lord Monboddo.

Sept. 24, 1788.

THE questions concerning India, which you do me the honour to think me capable of answering, require a longer answer than the variety of my present occupations allow me to write. Suffer me therefore to enclose a discourse, not yet published, which may give you some satisfaction on Indian literature; and to refer you to the first volume of the Transactions of our Society, which will, I hope, be sent next season to Europe. As my principal object is the jurisprudence, I have not yet examined the philosophy of the Brahmans; but I have seen enough of it to be convinced, that the doctrines of the Vidanti school are Platonic.

CXL.

To J. Shore, Esq.

Jan. 26, 1789.

LET me trouble you, as you see colonel Kyd oftener than I do, to give him sir George Young's botanical letter, which I annex. I have requested colonel

Martin to send sir George all the seeds which he can collect, and will co-operate (as far as my occupations will allow) in the plan of transferring to the West-Indies, the spicy forests of Asia : but I have little time at command ; and, holding every engagement sacred, I must devote my leisure to the system of Asiatic jurisprudence, which I will see established before I see Europe : it will properly follow your wise and humane design of giving security to the property of the natives. When you have had a copy taken of the Persian Hermit,* I shall be glad to borrow it, that my *munshi* may transcribe it. Could you not find some leisure hour to explain an episode of Homer to Serajélhak, that he might try his hand with it ?

CXLE

To J. Shore, Esq.

1789.

FLEMING† still keeps me a prisoner, and forbids my reading aloud, which used to be my chief amusement in the evening. I trust you will soon be well, and that we shall ere long meet. If the

* A Persian poem, composed on the subject of Parnel's Hermit.

† His medical attendant.

man you mention be guilty, I hope he will be punished : I hate favouritism ; and if I had the dominions of Chingis Khan, I would not have one favourite.

* * * * *

The poem of Washi has greatly delighted me ; it almost equals Metastasio's on a similar subject, and far surpasses other *Wasukts** which I have seen ; yet the beautiful simplicity of the old Arabs, in their short elegies, appears unrivalled by any thing in Persian : I transcribe one of them, which I have just read in the Hamasa.†

Cease, fruitless tears ! afflicted bosom, rest !
My tears obey, but not my wounded breast.
Ah, no ! this heart, despairing and forlorn,
Till time itself shall end, must bleed and mourn.

* *Wasukt*, the appellation of an amatory elegy, descriptive of the various sensations and passions excited by love.

† The original is omitted.

CXLII.

To Mr. Justice Hyde.

June 5, 1789.

THOUGH I do not wish to give you the pain of sympathising, (as I know you will sympathise) with me in my present distress ; yet, as you possibly know it, and as you might think me unusually dejected when we meet, I cannot forbear writing to you ; especially, as I feel a kind of relief in venting my sorrow to an approved friend. One or two English papers mention the death of lady Jones's father, in such a manner, as to leave me no hope of its being a mistake : this I have known since the 15th of May ; but as it may possibly be untrue, I could not, in any degree, prepare her for the dreadful intelligence : I have therefore taken effectual measures to keep it secret from her ; but it is a secret which cannot long be kept ; and the bare idea of the pang, which she too soon must feel, and the probable effects of that pang on her delicate constitution, now particularly enervated by the hot season, give me a degree of anguish, which I never before felt. Mr. Shore has kindly promised to take care, that all her letters by the Indiamen shall be sent in a sealed packet to me, that I may select for her first perusal

the letter from her wisest friend, the dowager lady Spencer, whose hand-writing I cannot mistake : I wish I could suppress them all, but that is impossible. The pain of losing our parents, time, and time only, will mitigate ; but my dread is, that the first shock will have some terrible effect on her health, and this fear haunts me night and day. That your letters may contain the most comfortable news, and that I may see you on Wednesday in perfect health, is the hearty wish of,

My dear sir, your faithful and affectionate

WILLIAM JONES.

CXLIII.

To J. Shore, Esq.

June 9, 1789.

• • • • •

I AM glad Jayadeva* pleases you, and thank you for the sublime period of Hooker ; of which I had only before seen the first part : his idea of heavenly and eternal law is just and noble ; and human law, as derived from it, must partake of the praise, as far as it is perfectly administered ; but *corruptio op-*

* Gitagovinda, or the songs of Jayadeva.—See sir W. Jones's Works, vol. i.

timi fit pessima, and if the administration of law should ever be corrupted, some future philosopher or orator will thus exhibit the reverse of the medal :

“ Of Law, there can be no more acknowledged, than that her seat is the store-house of quirks, her voice the dissonance of brawls ; all her followers, indeed, both at the bar and below it, pay her homage ; the very least as gaining their share, and the greatest as hoping for wealth and fame : but kings, nobles, and people, of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all have uniformly found their patience exhausted by her delays, and their purse by her boundless demands.” *

* * * * * The parody was so obvious, that I could not refrain from showing you the wrong side of the tapestry, with the same figures and flowers, but all maimed and discoloured.

* The following is the passage in Hooker, alluded to by sir W. Jones :

“ Of Law, there can be no less acknowledged, than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world : all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, and the greatest as not exempted from her power ; both angels and men, and creatures of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy.”

CXLIV.

To J. Shore, Esq.

1789.

WE have finished the twentieth and last book of Guicciardini's History, the most authentic, I believe (may I add, I fear ?) that ever was composed. I believe it, because the historian was an actor in his terrible drama, and personally knew the principal performers in it ; and I fear it, because it exhibits the woful picture of society in the 15th and 16th centuries. If you can spare Reid, we are now ready for him, and will restore his two volumes on our return from Crishna-nagur.

When we meet, I will give you an account of my progress in detecting a most impudent fraud, in forging a Sanscrit book on oaths, by Hindus, since I saw you. The book has been brought to me, on a few yellow Bengal leaves, apparently modern. The Brahman, who brought it from Sambhu Chandra Rai, said it was twelve years old ; I believe it had not been written twelve days. He said, the original work of Mahadeva himself, from which the prohibition of swearing by the water of the Ganges was extracted, was at Crishna-nagur. I desired him to tell Sambhu Chandra, who wants

me to admit him a suitor *in formâ pauperis*, without taking his oath, that unless he brought me the original, and that apparently ancient, I should be convinced that he meant to impose upon me.

CXLV.

To Mr. Justice Hyde.

Sept. 19, 1789.

You have given lady Jones great pleasure, by informing us, from so good authority, that a ship is arrived from England: she presents you with her best compliments.

Most readily shall I acquiesce in any alleviation of Horrebow's* misery, that you and sir Robert Chambers shall think just and legal. I have not one law book with me; nor, if I had many, should I perfectly know where to look for a mitigation by the court, of a sentence, which they pronounced, after full consideration of all its probable effects on the person condemned. I much doubt, whether

* This man, a foreigner, commanding a vessel trading to Bengal, was convicted before the supreme court of judicature, of purchasing the children of natives, for the purpose of carrying them out of the country, and selling them as slaves. It was the first instance of an attempt of this kind; and he was prosecuted by order of the government of Bengal.

it can legally be done ; nor do I think the petition states any urgent reasons for it. First, he mentions losses already sustained, (not therefore to be prevented by his enlargement) and, in my opinion, they cannot easily be more than he deserves. Next, his wife's health may have been injured by his disgrace, and may not be restored by our shortening the time of his confinement, which, if I remember, is almost half expired, and was as short as justice, tempered with lenity, would allow. His own health is not said to be affected by the imprisonment in such a place, at such a season ; for if it were proved that he were dangerously ill, we might, I suppose, remove him to a healthier place, or even let him go to sea, if able surgeons swore, that, in their serious opinion, nothing else could save his life. That is by no means the case ; and I confess, I have no compassion for him ; my compassion is for the enslaved children and their parents. Nevertheless, I know the benevolence of your heart, and shall approve whatever you and sir R. C. may do, if any precedent can be found or recollected of a power in the court to do what is now prayed.

I am, &c.

CXLVI.

From Prince Adam Czartoryski.

Sept. 20, 1788.

IT is but a fortnight ago since the gentleman, to whom the most flattering proof of your kind remembrance was committed, delivered it into my hand : I received it with a joined sentiment of gratitude and of vanity. It will be an easy task for you to find out why I am grateful ; and every body, but yourself, will soon hit upon the reasons why your having thought of me makes me vain.

The letter, the idea of the man who wrote it, the place from whence it came, the language of Hafez—all that put together, set my imagination at once in a blaze, and wafted me over in a wish from the Pole to the Indies : it has awakened a train of ideas, which lay dormant for a while ; and rekindled my somewhat forgotten heat for the Oriental Muses, which is not, however, to be put on the account of inconstancy, but to my having been crossed in my love for them, very near as much as sir Roger de Coverly is said to have been, in his addresses to his unkind widow. The war, broke out of late, deprived me of my last resource,

which was a dervish native of Samarcand, who was just come to live with me in the capacity of *munshi*: his religious zeal would not allow him to continue out of sight of the Sangiale Sheriff; so he hastened back to his brethren. After the reception of your letter, I grieved still more in seeing myself deprived of proper and easy means to cultivate so interesting a branch of learning, and could not forbear casting an impatient reflection on that warlike spirit, whose influence leaves nothing happy, nothing undisturbed. The acquisition of a language will always appear to me much more valuable than that of a desert. The sudden departure of my dervish has, I find, soured my temper against conquest and conquerors. I wished it was in my power to sweeten it again by the charms of your intercourse, under the benign influence of the climate you inhabit. How happy should I think myself in the enjoyment of your leisure hours, in perusing a country where every object is worth dwelling upon; in paying a visit to the rajah of Kisnagoor, with a letter of recommendation from your hand! But whilst, with a heated fancy, I am expatiating on those delightful subjects, I find myself, in reality, circling in a round of things as little suiting with my inclination, as the roughness of the heaven does with my constitution; for, *quid frigore Sarmatico pejus?* which becomes still more intolerable, if you add to it, the *in arcto et inglorius labor*, to which we are unfortunately doomed. I cannot finish this letter, without repeating to you the warmest acknowledgment of your kind remembrance. I shall be certain to pre-

serve it for ever, if the highest degree of esteem for your eminent qualities and talents, and the most sincere regard for your person, are sufficient titles to insure it. I am, invariably, &c.

CXLVII.

To Sir Joseph Banks.

DEAR SIR JOSEPH,

Sept. 17, 1789.

THE season for paying my annual epistolary rents being returned with the rough gales of the autumnal equinox, I am eager to offer my tribute where it is most due, to my best landlord—who, instead of claiming, like the India company, sixteen shillings in the pound for the neat profits of my farm (I speak correctly, though metaphorically), voluntarily offers me indulgences, even if I should run in arrears.

You have received, I trust, the pods of the finest Dacca cotton, with which the commercial resident at that station supplied me, and which I sent by different conveyances, some enclosed to yourself, some to sir George Young, and some by private hands: but I have always found it safer to send letters and small parcels by the public packet, than by careless and inconsiderate individuals. I am not partial to the *pryangu*, which I now find is its true

name ; but Mr. Shore found benefit from it, and procured the fresh plants from Arracan, which died unluckily in their way to Calcutta. But seriously, it deserves a longer trial, before its tonic virtues, if it have any, can be ascertained. It is certainly not so fine a bitter as camomile or columbo root.

I wish politics at the devil, but hope that when the king recovered, science revived. It gives me great pain to know, that party, as it is called, (I call it faction ; because I hold party to be grounded on principles, and faction on self-interest, which excludes all principle) has found its way into a literary club, who meet reciprocally to impart and receive new ideas. I have deep-rooted political principles, which the law taught me ; but I should never think of introducing them among men of science : and if, on my return to Europe ten or twelve years hence, I should not find more science than politics in the club, my seat in it will be at the service of any politician who may wish to be one of the party.

An intimate friend of Mr. Blane has written to him, at my request, for the newly-discovered fragrant grass ; and should the plants be sent before the last ships of the season sail, they shall be sent to you. Whether they be the nard of the ancients, I must doubt, because we have sweet grasses here of innumerable species ; and Reuben Burrow brought me an odoriferous grass from the place where the Ganges enters India, and where it covers whole acres, and perfumes the whole country. From his account of it, I suspect it to be Mr. Blane's ; but I could make nothing of the dry speci-

mens, except that they differed widely from the Jatamansi, which I am persuaded is the Indian nard of Ptolemy. I can only procure the dry Jatamansi; but, if I can get the stalks, roots, and flowers from Butan, I will send them to you. Since the death of Koenig, we are in great want of a professed botanist. I have twice read with rapture the *Philosophia Botanica*, and have Murray's edition of the *Genera et Species Plantarum* always with me; but, as I am no lynx, like Linnæus, I cannot examine minute blossoms—especially those of grasses.

We are far advanced in the second volume of our Transactions.

CXLVIII.

To John Wilmot, Esq.

Sept. 20, 1789.

EVERY sentence in your letter gave me great pleasure, and particularly the pleasing and just account of your truly venerable father. Lady Jones, after the first pang for the loss of hers, resigned herself with true piety to the will of God: she is very weak, and always ill during the heats. I have been, ever since my seasoning, as they call it, perfectly well, notwithstanding incessant business seven hours in a day, for four or five months in a year, and unremitted application, during the vacations, to a vast and interesting study—a complete knowledge of In-

dia—which I can only attain in the country itself : and I do not mean to stay in the country longer than the last year of the eighteenth century. I rejoice that the king is well ; but take no interest in the contests of your aristocratical factions. The time never was, when I would have enlisted under the banners of any faction ; though I might have carried a pair of colours, if I had not spurned them, in either legion. My party is that of the whole people, and my principles, which the law taught me, are only to be changed by a change of existence.

CXLIX.

To Mr. Justice Hyde.

Oct. 20, 1789.

THOUGH I hope, my dear sir, to be with you almost as soon as this letter ; yet I write it because it is the last that I shall write to any one for the next eleven months ; and I feel so light, after the completion of my severe epistolary task, that I am disposed to play a voluntary. I have answered fifty very long letters from Europe, and a multitude of short ones ; among the rest, I had one from the chief baron, who desires his remembrance to you, by the title of his old and worthy friend : another from Master Wilmot, informs me that his father, sir Eardley, had nearly ended his eightieth year, with as good health,

and as clear intellects, as he ever had in the prime of life. When I express a hope of seeing you in two or three days, it is only a hope ; for I shall affront the mandarin at Chinsura,* if I do not make my annual visit to him : now I can only visit him at night ; and the wind and tide may delay me, as they did last year. In all events, I shall be with you, if I live, before the end of the week, as I am preparing to go on board my pinnace. Besides my annuities of Europe letters, which I pay at this season, I have been winding up all the odds and ends of all my private or literary concerns, and shall think of nothing, for eleven months to come, but law, European or Indian. I have written four papers for our expiring Society, on very curious subjects, and have prepared materials for a discourse on the Chinese : the society is a puny, rickety child, and must be fed with pap ; nor shall it die by my fault ; but die it must, for I cannot alone support it. In my youthful days, I was always ready to join in a dance or a concert ; but I could never bring myself to dance a solitary hornpipe, or to play a solo. When I see Titsingh, (who, by the way, will never write any thing for us as long as his own Batavian society subsists) I will procure full information concerning the pincushion rice, and will report it to you. Lady Jones is as usual, and sends her best remembrance. I, too, am as usual, and as ever,

Dear sir, your faithful, &c:

WILLIAM JONES.

* Mr. Titsingh, governor of Chinsura.

CL.

To J. Shore, Esq.

Oct. 20, 1789.

YOUR approbation of *Sacontala*,* gives, at least, as much pleasure to the translator as you had from the perusal of it, and would encourage me to translate more dramas, if I were not resolved to devote all my time to law, European and Indian.

The idea of your happiness (and few men have a brighter prospect of it than yourself) reconciles me to our approaching separation, though it must be very long: for I will not see England, while the interested factions, which distract it, leave the legislature no time for the great operations which are essential for public felicity; while patriotic virtues are derided as visionary; and while the rancour of contending parties fills with thorns those particular societies, in which I hoped to gather nothing but roses. I am sorry (for the metaphor brings to my mind the *Bostani Kheiyal*†) that the garden of fancy should have as many weeds as that

* The Indian drama of *Sacontala*, or the Fatal Ring, translated by sir W. Jones.—See his Works, vol. ix.

† The Garden of Fancy; the title of an Eastern romance in Persian, in sixteen quarto volumes.

of politics. Serajélhak pronounced it, with emphasis, a wonderful work; and a young Mussulman assured me, that it comprised all the finest inventions of India and Persia. The work will probably mend as it proceeds.

We must spare ourselves the pain of taking a formal leave: so farewell. May you live happy in a free country!

I am, &c.

• • • • •

• OLI.

*From Baron Reviczki.**

London, June 30, 1789.

By the Vestal frigate, which was to convey lord Cathcart to China, I wrote an answer to your elegant Persian letter, which I received through Mr. Elmsley: it was a most agreeable proof to me, that I was still honoured with a place in your remembrance, notwithstanding the distance which separates us. I have since learned, that colonel Cathcart died on the voyage; and as the Vestal, in consequence of this event, returned to England, I am

• Written in French.

not without apprehension, that my letter never reached you. I have since received a most superb work, printed at Calcutta, and which would do honour to the first printing-office in Europe, accompanied with an elegant and obliging letter. I recognised in it the hand of a skilful penman, if I may be allowed to judge ; for I have so long neglected the cultivation of Oriental literature, that I am almost as much a stranger to it, as if I had never learned it. I have never yet seen so elegant a specimen of Oriental typography, as that in the Persian poem with which you favoured me.

I cannot express how much I regret the loss of your society during my residence in London, which would have afforded me so much gratification ; and I doubt if I shall have an opportunity of enjoying it after your return, as I must soon enter upon the new office conferred upon me by the emperor, of minister at Naples. But whatever my destination may be, of this you may be assured—that neither absence nor distance will ever weaken my attachment to you ; and that, during life, I shall consider myself equally bound by gratitude and inclination to preserve it.

I am, sir, your most obedient humble servant,.

COUNT REVICZEI.

CLII.

To Dr. Price.

MY DEAR SIR, Crishna-nagur, Sept. 14, 1790.

I GIVE you my warmest thanks for your friendly letter, and acceptable present of an admirable discourse, which I have read with great delight. * * *

—We have twenty millions (I speak with good information) of Indian subjects, whose laws I am now compiling and arranging, in the hope of securing their property to themselves and their heirs: they are pleased with the work; but it makes me a very bad correspondent. I had flattered myself with a hope of making a visit to our venerable friend at Philadelphia, before the retreat which I meditate to my humble cottage in Middlesex; but God's will be done! We shall meet, I devoutly hope, in a happier state.

CLIII.

*To the Rev. Dr. Ford.**

Crishna-nagur, Oct. 11, 1790.

THOUGH I am, for the best of reasons, the worst of correspondents, yet I will no longer delay to thank you for your friendly letter of the fourth of February, and for your kind attentions to colonel Poller. You have a much better correspondent in Mr. Langlas, whose patriotism, I hope, will succeed, and whose Persian literature will be a source of delight to him, if not to the public. Mr. Wehl's favour never reached me, or I would have answered it immediately, and I request you to inform him of my disappointment. The chances are about three to one against your receiving this; and the fear of writing for the sport of winds and waves, disheartens me whenever I take up a pen.

* Principal of Magdalen Hall, Oxford.

CLIV.

To William Shipley, Esq.

DEAR SIR,

Crishna-nagur, Oct. 11, 1790.

THE ships which brought your kind letters, arrived so near the end of my short vacation, that I have but just time to thank you for them, as I do most heartily, as well as for your acceptable presents. Anna Maria has recovered from the pang which the sad intelligence from England gave her, and a pious resignation has succeeded to her natural anguish. You are, I hope, quite recovered from your illness, and again promoting the welfare and convenience of mankind, by your judicious exertions and ingenious inventions, to which all possible attention shall be shown in this country. May you very long enjoy the pleasure of doing good, which is, I well know, the only reward you seek !—It is now settled here, that the natives are proprietors of their land, and that it shall descend by their own laws. I am engaged in superintending a complete system of Indian laws ; but the work is vast, difficult, and delicate : it occupies all my leisure, and makes me the worst of correspondents. I trust, however, that long letters are not necessary to convince you that

I am, &c.

CLV.

*To Mrs. Sloper.**

Crishna-nagur, Oct. 13, 1790.

I DESERVE no thanks for the attentions which it is both my duty and my delight to show our beloved Anna; but you deserve, and I beg you to accept, my warmest thanks for your entertaining letter, for your frequent kind remembrance of me, and for your acceptable present of a snuff-box in the most elegant taste. All that you write concerning our friends, is highly interesting to me; and all pleasing, except the contents of your last page: but the most agreeable part of your letter is the hope which you express, that the Bath waters would restore you to health: and it gives me infinite pleasure to know that your hope has been realised. Anna will give you a full account of herself, and will mention some of the many reasons that make me a bad correspondent. I thank you for Erskine's speech; but I was myself an advocate so long, that I never mind what advocates say, but what they prove; and I can only examine proofs in causes

* Sister to lady Jones, and married to William Charles Sloper, Esq.

brought before me. I knew you would receive, with your usual good-nature, my saucy jests about your hand-writing, but hope you will write to me as you write to Anna ; for you know, the more any character resembles pot-hooks, &c. the better I can read it. My love to Amelia, and to all whom you love, which would give them a claim, if they had no other, to the affection of, my dear madam,

Your ever faithful,

WILLIAM JONES.

CLVI.

To Sir John Macpherson, Bart.

Crishna-nagur, Oct. 15, 1790.

I GIVE you hearty thanks for your postscript, which (as you enjoin secrecy) I will allude to ambiguously, lest this letter should fall into other hands than yours. Be assured, that what I am going to say, does not proceed from an imperfect sense of your kindness ; but really I want no addition to my fortune, which is enough for me ; and if the whole legislature of Britain were to offer me a different station from that which I now fill, I should most gratefully and respectfully decline it. The character of an ambitious judge is, in my opinion, very dangerous to public justice ; and if I were a sole legislator, it should be enacted, that every judge, as

well as every bishop, should remain for life in the place which he first accepted : this is not the language of a cynic, but of a man who loves his friends, his country, and mankind ; who knows the short duration of human life, recollects that he has lived four and forty years, and has learned to be contented. Of public affairs, you will receive better intelligence than I am able to give you. My private life is similar to that which you remember ; seven hours a day, on an average, are occupied by my duties as a magistrate, and one hour to the new Indian digest ; for one hour in the evening, I read aloud to lady Jones. We are now travelling to the sources of the Nile with Mr. Bruce, whose work is very interesting and important. The second volume of the Asiatic Transactions is printed, and the third ready for the press. I jabber Sanscrit every day with the pundits, and hope, before I leave India, to understand it as well as I do Latin. Among my letters, I find one directed to you ; I have unsealed it, and though it only shows that I was not inattentive to the note with which you favoured me on the eve of your departure, yet I annex it, because it was yours, though brought back by my servant.

The latter part of it will raise melancholy ideas ; but death, if we look at it firmly, is only a change of place : every departure of a friend is a sort of death ; and we are all continually dying and reviving. We shall all meet : I hope to meet you again in India ; but, wherever we meet, I expect to see you well and happy. None of your friends can wish for your health and happiness more ardently than, my dear sir, &c.

CLVII.

To R. Morris, Esq.

Calcutta, Oct. 30, 1790.

WHEN your letter arrived, I had begun my judicial campaign, and am so busy, I can only answer it very shortly. Lady J. and myself are sincerely rejoiced, that you have so good an establishment in so fine a country. Need I say, that it would give me infinite delight to promote your views? As far as I can, I will promote them; but though I have a very extensive acquaintance, I neither have, nor can have, influence; I can only approve and recommend, and do my best to circulate your proposals. We are equally obliged to you for your kind invitation, as if we had it in our power to accept it; but I fear we cannot leave Calcutta long enough to revisit your Indian Montpelier. As one of the Cymro-dorians, I am warmly interested in British antiquities and literature; but my honour is pledged for the completion of the new digest of Hindu laws, and I have not a moment to spare for any other study.

CLVIII.

To Sir J. Sinclair, Bart. Whitehall.

Crishna-nagur, Oct. 15, 1791.

You may rely upon my best endeavours to procure information concerning the Asiatic wool, or soft hair; and the animals that carry it. I had the pleasure of circulating your very interesting tracts at Calcutta, and of exhibiting the specimens of very beautiful wool, with which you favoured me. My own time, however, is engaged from morning to night in discharging my public duties, and in arranging the new digest of Indian laws: I must therefore depend chiefly on others, in procuring the information you are desirous of obtaining. Mr. Bebb, of the board of trade, and colonel Kyd, who superintends the Company's garden, have promised to assist me. The wool of these provinces is too coarse to be of use: but that of Kerman in Persia, which you know by the name of *Carmanian* wool, is reckoned exquisitely fine; and you might, I suppose, procure the sheep from Bombay. The shawl goats would live, I imagine, and breed, in England; but it is no less difficult to procure the females from Cashmir, than to procure mares from Arabia. When you see Mr. Richardson, do me the favour to give him my best thanks for the parcel which he sent me, by desire of the Highland Society.

CLIX.

To George Hardinge, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR, Crishna-nagur, Oct. 16, 1791.

IF the warmth of hearts were measured by the frequency of letters, my heart must be thought the coldest in the world: but you, I am confident, will never apply so fallacious a thermometer. In serious truth, I am, and must be, the worst of correspondents for the following reasons among a hundred; a strong glare and weak eyes, long tasks and short day-light, confinement in court six hours a day, and in my chambers three or four, not to mention casual interruptions and engagements.—You spoke so lightly of your complaint, that I thought it must be transient; and should have been extremely grieved, if, in the very moment when I heard you had been seriously ill, I had not heard of your recovery.

Anna Maria has promised me to sail for Europe in January, 1793; and I will follow her, when I can live as well in England on my private fortune, as I can do here on half my salary. * * *

I cannot but like your sonnets, yet wish you would abstain from politics, which add very little to the graces of poetry.

CLX.

To Sir Joseph Banks.

Crishna-nagur, Oct. 18, 1791.

I THANK you heartily for your kind letters, but perhaps I cannot express my thanks better than by answering them as exactly as I am able.

First, as to sending plants from India, I beg you to accept my excuses, and to make them to sir George Young, for my apparent inattention to such commissions. In short, if you wish to transfer our Indian plants to the Western islands, the Company must direct Kyd and Roxburgh to send them, and their own captains to receive them, and attend to them.

We are in sad want of a travelling botanist, with some share of my poor friend Kœnig's knowledge and zeal. A stationary botanist would fix on the indigo-fera, as the chief object of his care. Roxburgh will do much on the coast, if he can be relieved from his terrible head-aches; but here we have no assistance.

I have neither eyes nor time for a botanist; yet, with lady Jones's assistance, I am continually advancing; and we have examined about 170 Linnæan genera. She brought home, a morning or two ago,

the most lovely *epidendrum* that ever was seen, but the description of it would take up too much room in a letter; it grew on a lofty *amra*, but it is an air plant, and puts forth its fragrant enamelled blossoms in a pot without earth or water: none of the many species of Linnæus corresponds exactly with it. You must not imagine that, because I am, and shall be, *sauy* about the Linnæan language, that I have not the highest veneration for its great author; but I think his diction barbarous and pedantic, particularly in his *Philosophia Botanica*, which I have a right to criticise, having read it three times with equal attention and pleasure. Had Van Rheede exhibited the Sanscrit names with accuracy, we should not be puzzled with reading the Indian poems and medical tracts; but in all his twelve volumes, I have not found above ten or twelve names correctly expressed, either in Sanscrit or Arabic. I shall touch again on botany, but I proceed with your first letter. I have little knowledge of Yacob Bruce; but his five volumes, which I read aloud, (except some passages which I could only read with my eyes) are so entertaining, that I wished for five more; and readily forgave, not only his mistakes in the botanical language, and in Arabic, but even his arrogance, which he carries *extra flammantia mœnia mundi*.

Keir's paper on distilling I never saw in print, though I must have heard it read by our secretary; but as the worthy author of it is in London, where probably you will have met him, he will satisfy you on the subject.

The *madhuca* is, beyond a doubt, the *bassia*; but I can safely assert, that not one of fifty blossoms

which I had examined; had 16 filaments, 8 above the throat, and 8 within the tube. That Koenig, whom I knew to be very accurate, had seen such a character, I doubt not; but he should not have set it down as constant. I frequently saw 26 and 28 filaments, sometimes 12, and the average was about 20 or 22. By the way, my excellent friend, you will do us a capital service, either by printing Koenig's manuscripts, or by sending us a copy of them; and we will send you, in return, not only the correct Sanscrit names, but the plants themselves, at least the seeds, if you can prevail on any captain to take care of them. • • • • •

That the poem of Calidas* entertained you, gives me great pleasure; but it diverts me extremely, to hear from others, that the authenticity of the poem is doubted in England; but I am not sure that my own errors of inattention may not have occasioned mistakes. The use of the pollen in flowers is, I believe, well known to the Brahmans: but I am not sure, that I have not added the epithet *prolific*, to distinguish it from common dust, which would have been the exact version of *renu*. The blue *nymphæa*, which I have sound reasons for believing the *lotus* of Egypt, is a native of Upper India; here we have only the white and rose-coloured. *Filament* is not used as a botanical word, but merely as a thread; and the filaments for the bracelet are drawn from the stalk of the *nymphæa*. The *hart*, properly so called, may not be a native of Bengal; but Calidas lived at Ugein, and lays his scene near the northern mountains: all the rest is clear;

* Sacontala, or the Fatal Ring.

bears and boars, and all wild beasts, have been hunted here immemorially. The *cocila* sings charmingly here in the spring; Polier will show you drawings of the male and female, but will, perhaps, call it *co-il*: the story of its eggs always struck me as very remarkable. The *amra* is *mangifera*; the *mellica*, I believe *nyctanthes zambak*; the *madhavi* creeper, *banisteria*. The *ensa*, I cannot see in blossom. The *swisha* is *mimosa odoratissima*; the *pippála*, *ficus religiosa*. If I recollect *lacsha*, it is not a plant, but *lac*. *Vana dosini* is a Sanscrit epithet of the *banisteria*. As to nard, I know not what to say: if the Greeks meant only fragrant grass, we have nards in abundance, *acorus*, *schoenus*, *andropogon*, *cyperus*, &c.: but I have no evidence that they meant any such thing. On Arrian, or rather on Aristobulus, we cannot safely rely, as they place cinuamon in Arabia, and myrrh in Persia. Should any travelling botanist find the species of *andropogon*, mentioned by Dr. Blane, in the plains of Gedrosia, it would be some evidence; but would, at the same time, prove that it was not the Indian nard, which never was supposed to grow in Persia. As at present advised, I believe the Indian nard of the ancients to have been a valerian; at least the nard of Ptolemy, which is brought from the very country mentioned by him as famed for the spike-nard.

And now, my dear sir Joseph, I have gone through both your letters: I am, for many good reasons, a bad correspondent; but principally because the discharge of my public duties leaves me no more time than is sufficient for necessary refreshments and relaxation.

The last twenty years of my life I shall spend, I trust, in a studious retreat; and if you know of a pleasant country house to be disposed of in your part of Middlesex, with pasture-ground for my cattle, and garden ground enough for my amusement, have the goodness to inform me of it. I shall be happy in being your neighbour; and though I write little now, will talk then as much as you please.

I believe I shall send a box of inestimable manuscripts, Sanscrit and Arabic, to your friendly care. If I return to England, you will restore them to me; if I die in my voyage to China, or my journey through Persia, you will dispose of them as you please.* Wherever I may die, I shall be, while I live, my dear sir, &c.

CLXI.

To Warren Hastings, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR, Crishna-pagur, Oct. 20, 1791.

BEFORE you can receive this, you will, I doubt not, have obtained a complete triumph over your persecutors; and your character will have risen, not brighter indeed, but more conspicuously bright,

* The MSS. here alluded to, together with a large collection of Eastern MSS. were presented to the Royal Society, by lady Jones, after the death of sir William.

from the furnace of their persecution. Happy should I be if I could congratulate you in person on your victory; but, though I have a fortune in England, which might satisfy a man of letters, yet I have not enough to establish that absolute independence, which has been the chief end and aim of my life; and I must stay in this country a few years longer: Lady Jones has, however, promised me to take her passage for Europe in January, 1793, and I will follow her when I can: she is pretty well, and presents her kindest remembrance to you and Mrs. Hastings, whom I thank most heartily for a very obliging and elegant letter. My own health has, by God's blessing, been very firm, but my eyes are weak, and I have constantly employed them eight or nine hours a day. My principal amusement is botany, and the conversation of the pundits, with whom I talk fluently in the language of the *Gods*; and my business, besides the discharge of my public duties, is the translation of Menu, and of the digest which has been compiled at my instance. Our Society still subsists, and the third volume of their Transactions is so far advanced, that it will certainly be published next season. Samuel Davis has translated the *Surya Siddhanta*, and is making discoveries in Indian astronomy; while Wilford is pursuing his geographical inquiries at Benares, and has found, or thinks he has found, an account of Africa and Europe, and even of Britain by name, in the Scanda Puran: he has sent us a chart of the Nile from Sanscrit authorities, and I expect soon to receive his proofs and illustrations. Of public affairs in India, I say little, because I can say nothing with certainty; the

seasons and elements have been adverse to us in Mysore. Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me to be, with unfeigned regard, your faithful and obedient

WILLIAM JONES.

CLXII.

To Sir Joseph Banks.

Calcutta, Nov. 19, 1791.

SINCE I sent my letter to the packet of the Queen, I received the enclosed from a Hindu of my acquaintance ; and I send his *cusha* flowers, which I have not eyes to examine, especially in a season of business : the leaves are very long, with a point excessively long and fine ; their edges are rough downwards ; in other respects smooth. As this plant is, to my knowledge, celebrated in the Veda, I am very desirous of knowing its Linnæan name. I cannot find it in Van Rheeде.

CLXIII.

*To J. Shore, Esq.**

MY DEAR SIR,

A FEW days after I troubled you about the yacht, I felt a severe pang on hearing of your domestic misfortune : and I felt more for you than I should for most men, on so melancholy an occasion, because I well know the sensibility of your heart. The only topic of consolation happily presented itself to you : reason perhaps might convince us, that the death of a created being never happens without the will of the Creator, who governs this world by a special interposition of his providential care ; but as this is a truth which Revelation expressly teaches us, our only true comfort in affliction must be derived from Christian philosophy, which is so far from encouraging us to stifle our natural feelings, that even the divine Author of it wept on the death of a friend.— This doctrine, though superfluous to you, is always present to my mind ; and I shall have occasion, in a few years, by the course of nature, to press it on the mind of Lady Jones, the great age of whose mother is one of my reasons for hoping most anxiously, that nothing may prevent her returning

* Written in the autumn of 1793, about two months before the departure of lady Jones from India.

to England this season. • • •

I will follow her as soon as I can, possibly at the beginning of 1795, but probably not till the season after that; for although I shall have more than enough to supply all the wants of a man, who would rather have been Cincinnatus with his plough, than Lucullus with all his wealth—yet I wish to complete the system of Indian laws while I remain in India, because I wish to perform whatever I promise, with the least possible imperfection; and, in so difficult a work, doubts might arise, which the pundits alone can remove. You continue, I hope, to find the gardens healthy: nothing can be more pleasant than the house in which we live; but it might justly be called the temple of the winds, especially as it has an octagonal form, like that erected at Athens to those boisterous divinities: I cannot get rid of the rheumatism which their keen breath has given me, and submit, with reluctance, to the necessity of wrapping myself in shawls and flannel. We continue to be charmed with the perspicuity, moderation, and eloquence of Filangieri.

Of European politics I think as little as possible; not because they do not interest my heart, but because they give me too much pain. I have “good will towards men, and wish peace on earth;” but I see chiefly under the sun, the two classes of men whom Solomon describes—the oppressor and the oppressed. I have no fear, in England, of open despotism, nor of anarchy. I shall cultivate my fields and gardens, and think as little as possible of monarchs or oligarchs. I am, &c.

The few months allotted to the existence of sir W. Jones, after the departure of his wife, were almost wholly devoted

FARTHER OBSERVATIONS ON THE PIETY OF
SIR WILLIAM JONES.

THE friends of religion, who know the value of the "sure and certain hopes" which it inspires, will remark, with satisfaction, the pious sentiments expressed by sir William Jones a few months only before his own death. In youth, he had determined to examine, with attention, the evidence of our holy religion; and unprejudiced inquiry terminated, as might be expected, in a rational conviction of its truth and divine authority.

Of this conviction, his publications (though none of them were professedly religious) afford ample and indubitable testimony; and it will not be deemed a superfluous task to select from them, and from other materials, his opinions on so important a subject.

Amongst the papers written by sir William Jones, was found the following prayer, composed by him

to the completion of the digest of Hindu and Mohammedan law: but on the evening of the 20th of April, 1794, after prolonging his walk to a late hour, he complained of aguish symptoms; but had no suspicion, at that time, of the real nature of his indisposition, which proved to be an inflammation of the liver: the progress of the complaint was uncommonly rapid, and terminated fatally on the 27th of April, when he expired, without a pang or groan.

on the first day of the year 1782; about fifteen months before his embarkation for India, and more than twelve years before his death :

A Prayer.

Jan. 1, 1782.

ETERNAL and Incomprehensible Mind, who, by thy boundless power, before time began, createdst innumerable worlds for thy glory, and innumerable orders of beings for their happiness, which thy infinite goodness prompted thee to desire, and thy infinite wisdom enabled thee to know : we, thy creatures, vanish into nothing before thy Supreme Majesty : we hourly feel our weakness ; we daily bewail our vices ; we continually acknowledge our folly : thee only we adore with awful veneration ; thee we thank with the most fervent zeal ; thee we praise with astonishment and rapture : to thy power we humbly submit ; of thy goodness we devoutly implore protection ; on thy wisdom we firmly and cheerfully rely. We do but open our eyes, and instantly we perceive thy divine existence ; we do but exert our reason, and in a moment we discover thy divine attributes : but our eyes could not behold thy splendour, nor could our minds comprehend thy divine essence ; we see thee only through thy stupendous and all-perfect works ; we know thee only by that ray of sacred light, which it has pleased thee to reveal : nevertheless, if creatures, too ignorant to conceive, and too depraved to pursue, the means of their own happiness, may, without presumption, express their wants to their Creator—let us humbly supplicate thee to remove from us that

evil, which thou hast permitted for a time to exist, that the ultimate good of all may be complete ; and to secure us from that vice, which thou sufferest to spread snares around us, that the triumph of virtue may be more conspicuous. Irradiate our minds with all useful truth ; instil into our hearts a spirit of general benevolence : give understanding to the foolish ; meekness to the proud ; temperance to the dissolute ; fortitude to the feeble-hearted ; hope to the desponding ; faith to the unbelieving ; diligence to the slothful ; patience to those who are in pain ; and thy celestial aid to those who are in danger : comfort the afflicted ; relieve the distressed ; supply the hungry with salutary food, and the thirsty with a plentiful stream. Impute not our doubts to indifference, nor our slowness of belief to hardness of heart ; but be indulgent to our imperfect nature, and supply our imperfections by thy heavenly favour. " Suffer not, we anxiously pray, suffer not oppression to prevail over innocence, nor the might of the avenger over the weakness of the just." Whenever we address thee in our retirement from the vanities of the world, if our prayers are foolish, pity us ; if presumptuous, pardon us ; if acceptable to thee, grant them, all-powerful God, grant them : and, as with our living voice, and with our dying lips, we will express our submission to thy decrees, adore thy providence, and bless thy dispensations ; so, in all future states, to which we reverently hope thy goodness will raise us, grant that we may continue praising, admiring, venerating, worshipping thee more and more, through worlds without number, and ages without end .

Long before this prayer was written, sir William Jones had demonstrated, to his own satisfaction, that Jesus was the Messiah, predicted by the prophets.* Amongst his projected occupations in India, one was to translate the Psalms into Persic, and the Gospel of Luke into Arabic—a design which could only have originated in his conviction of the importance and inspiration of these divine books; and, in the year after the date of the prayer, we have a direct and public avowal of his belief in the

* In a Hebrew copy of the book of Hosea, lord Teignmouth found a series of propositions in the hand-writing of sir W. Jones, containing the sketch of a demonstration of the divine authority of the Christian religion. These propositions appear to have been written about the year 1769: they are not expressed with such accuracy or elegance, as to justify a supposition that they were intended to be made public; but they afford an evidence of his early conviction of the truth and completion of the prophecies respecting our Saviour.

PROPOSITION I.

There is as much reason to believe, that the writings of Isaiah and the Hebrew prophets, as that those of Homer and the Greek poets, are more ancient than the time of Jesus.

Objection. Some men might have an interest in forging Isaiah.

Answer. Forged writings would have been more in point: those of Isaiah bear no marks of forgery; and the Jews themselves, who were puzzled by them, acknowledged their antiquity.

PROPOSITION II.

These ancient writings, especially Isaiah, allude to some great event, and to some real extraordinary person, "who

divinity of our Saviour; * and again, in the next, another prayer by him, expressing his exclusive reliance on the merits of his Redeemer for his acceptance with God. †

In a Dissertation by sir William Jones on the Gods of Greece, Italy, and Rome, written in 1784, but revised and printed in 1786, the following passage occurs: "Disquisitions concerning the manners and conduct of our species, in early times, or indeed at any time, are always curious at least, and

was put to death, and complained not," &c.—*Isaiah*, chap. liii.

PROPOSITION III.

The life and death of Jesus, his virtues and doctrines, though not his miracles, are as much to be believed, as the life and death of Socrates, his virtues, and his doctrine.

PROPOSITION IV.

No person, in the history of the Jews, before or after Jesus, coincides with this account, except Jesus.

Therefore Jesus was the subject of their writings, which are consequently inspired; and he a person of an extraordinary nature, that is, the Messiah.

If this be just reasoning, we may believe his miracles, and must obey his law.

If difficulties occur, and we are asked, "How can they be solved?" we may safely answer, "We do not know;" yet we may truly be, and justly be called, Christians.

To these propositions the following note is subjoined: "What must be the importance of a book, of which it may be truly said, 'If this book be not true, the religion which we profess is false?'"

* See page 42 of this volume.

† See preceding observations on the piety of sir W. Jones, page 53.

amusing ; but they are highly interesting to such as can say of themselves, with Chremes in the play, ' We are men, and take an interest in all that relates to mankind.' They may even be of solid importance in an age, when some intelligent and virtuous persons are inclined to doubt the authenticity of accounts delivered by Moses, concerning the primitive world ; since no modes or sources of reasoning can be unimportant which have a tendency to remove such doubts. Either the first eleven chapters of Genesis (all due allowances being made for a figurative Eastern style) are true, or the whole fabric of our national religion is false ; a conclusion, which none of us, I trust, would wish to be drawn. I, who cannot help believing the divinity of the Messiah, from the undisputed antiquity, and manifest completion of many prophecies, especially those of Isaiah, in the only person recorded by history to whom they are applicable—am obliged, of course, to believe the sanctity of the venerable books, to which that sacred person refers as genuine ; but it is not the truth of our national religion, as such, that I have at heart ; it is truth itself : and if any cool, unbiassed reader will clearly convince me, that Moses drew his narrative, through Egyptian conduits, from the primal fountains of Indian literature, I shall esteem him as a friend, for having weeded my mind from a capital error ; and promise to stand among the foremost in assisting to circulate the truth which he has ascertained. After such a declaration, I cannot but persuade myself, that no candid man will be displeased, if, in the course of my work, I make as free with any arguments that he may have advanced, as I should really desire him

to do with any of mine, that he may be disposed to controvert."

'That any reasoner could convince him that Moses had borrowed his narrative from Indian sources, he never, for a moment, supposed; and, if a doubt could be entertained on this subject, another passage, in the same dissertation, must at once annihilate it. He had indeed no hesitation to acknowledge his persuasion, that a connexion subsisted between the old idolatrous nations of Egypt, India, Greece, and Italy, long before they migrated to their several settlements, and, consequently, before the birth of Moses; but he was equally persuaded, that the truth of the proposition could, in no degree, affect the veracity and sanctity of the Mosaic history, which, if any confirmation of it were necessary, it would rather tend to confirm.

"The divine legate," says he, "educated by the daughter of a king, and in all respects highly accomplished, could not but know the mythological system of Egypt, but he must have condemned the superstitions of that people, and despised the speculative absurdities of their priests, though some of their traditions, concerning the creation and the flood, were founded on truth. Who was better acquainted with the mythology of Athens than Socrates? Who more accurately versed in the rabbinical doctrines than Paul? Who possessed clearer ideas of all ancient astronomical systems than Newton? or of scholastic metaphysics than Locke? In whom could the Romish church have had a more formidable opponent than in Chillingworth, whose deep knowledge of its tenets rendered

him so competent to dispute them? In a word; who more exactly knew the abominable rites and shocking idolatry of Canaan than Moses himself? Yet the learning of those great men only incited them to seek other sources of truth, piety, and virtue, than those in which they had long been immersed. There is no shadow, then, of a foundation for an opinion, that Moses borrowed the first nine or ten chapters of Genesis from the literature of Egypt; still less can the adamantine pillars of our Christian faith be moved by the result of any debates on the comparative antiquity of the Hindus and Egyptians, or of any inquiries into the Indian theology."

The testimony of sir William Jones to the verity and authenticity of the Old and New Testaments is well known: lord Teignmouth transcribed it from his own manuscript in his Bible:

"I have carefully and regularly perused these Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion, that the volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more sublimity, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains of eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever language they may have been written."

This opinion is repeated, with little variation of expression, in a discourse addressed to the Asiatic Society at Calcutta, in February 1791:

"Theological inquiries are no part of my present subject; but I cannot refrain from adding, that the collection of tracts, which we call, from their excellence, the Scriptures, contain, independently of a divine origin, more true sublimity, more exquisite

beauty, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains both of poetry and eloquence, than could be collected within the same compass, from all other books that were ever composed in any age, or in any idiom. The two parts, of which the Scriptures consist, are connected by a chain of compositions, which bear no resemblance, in form or style, to any that can be produced from the stores of Grecian, Indian, Persian, or even Arabian learning : the antiquity of those compositions no man doubts; and the unstrained application of them to events long subsequent to their publication, is a solid ground of belief, that they were genuine compositions, and consequently inspired. But if any thing be the absolute exclusive property of each individual, it is his belief; and I hope I should be one of the last men living, who could harbour a thought of obtruding my own belief on the free minds of others."

In his next discourse he mentions the Mosaic history, under a supposition (assumed for the sake of the argument which he was discussing) that it had no higher authority than any other book of history, which the researches of the curious had accidentally brought to light.

"On this supposition," says he, "that the first eleven chapters of the book which it is thought proper to call Genesis, are merely a preface to the oldest civil history now extant, we see the truth of them confirmed by antecedent reasoning, and by evidence in part highly probable, and in part certain." But that no misconception might be entertained on this awful subject, by the ignorant, and to avoid the possibility of any perverse misapplication of his sentiments, he adds: "but the connexion

of the Mosaic history with that of the Gospel, by a chain of sublime predictions, unquestionably ancient, and apparently* fulfilled, must induce us to think the Hebrew narrative more than human in its origin, and, consequently, true in every substantial part of it; though possibly expressed in figurative language, as many learned and pious men have believed, and as the most pious may believe, without injury, and perhaps with advantage, to the cause of revealed religion."

In a discourse, in 1793, he mentions, with satisfaction, the result of the inquiries of the Society over which he presided.

"In the first place, we cannot surely deem it an inconsiderable advantage, that all our historical researches have confirmed the Mosaic accounts of the primitive world; and our testimony on that subject ought to have the greater weight, because, if the result of our observations had been totally different, we should nevertheless have published them—not indeed with equal pleasure, but with equal confidence: for truth is mighty, and, whatever be its consequences, must always prevail: but, independently of our interest in corroborating the multiplied evidences of revealed religion, we could scarcely gratify our minds with a more useful and rational entertainment, than the contemplation of those wonderful revolutions in kingdoms and states, which have happened within little more than four thousand years; revolutions, almost as fully demonstrative of an all-ruling Providence, as the structure of

* The word *apparently* was no doubt meant as synonymous with *clearly*, or *manifestly*.

the universe, and the final causes which are discernible in its whole extent, and even in its remotest parts."

The preceding sentiments, although they are such as would naturally occur to a believer in the Scriptures, were not necessarily called for by the subject under his discussion, and could only have proceeded from his zeal in the investigation and propagation of truth. This was the fixed object of his whole life, as he has himself declared in the following elegant couplets :

Before thy mystic altar, heavenly Truth,
I kneel in manhood, as I knelt in youth.
Thus let me kneel, till this dull form decay,
And life's last shade be brighten'd by thy ray :
Then shall my soul, now lost in clouds below,
Soar without bound, without consuming glow.

THE following epitaph, evidently intended for himself, was written by sir William Jones, a short time before his decease : it displays resignation to the will of his Creator, and love and good-will to mankind.

AN EPITAPH.

Here was deposited
the mortal part of a man,
who feared God, but not death;
and maintained independence,
but sought not riches ;
Who thought
none below him, but the base and unjust,
none above him, but the wise and virtuous ;
Who loved
his parents, kindred, friends, country,
with an ardour
which was the chief source of
all his pleasures and all his pains :
and who, having devoted
his life to their service,
and to
the improvement of his mind,
resigned it calmly,
giving glory to his Creator,
wishing peace on earth,
and with
good-will to all creatures,
on the [twenty-seventh] day of [April,]
in the year of our blessed Redeemer,
one thousand seven hundred [and ninety-four].

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